

HOW ENGLAND WAS CALLED ALBION:
THE LEGENDARY HISTORY OF BRITAIN IN SCRIPT AND PRINT,
c.1330-1575

by
Neil B. Weijer

A dissertation submitted to Johns Hopkins University in conformity with the requirements for the
degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Baltimore, Maryland

May, 2017

© 2017 Neil B. Weijer
All Rights Reserved

Abstract

The legendary history of Britain's first kings was given full form around 1138, when Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia regum Britanniae* (*History of the Kings of Britain*) introduced Anglo-Norman England to Brutus, the purported great-grandson of Aeneas and eponymous founder of Britain. Brutus—whose descendants included King Lear, Cymbeline, Constantine the Great, and King Arthur—was one of a number of Trojan ancestors invented by the historians of twelfth-century Europe. Now notable for its contributions to Shakespearean drama and Arthurian romance, by the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries the story of Brutus and the early Britons was most frequently encountered in chronicle histories of England, particularly the vernacular adaptations now known as *Brut* chronicles, which survive in over two hundred manuscript exempla as well as numerous printed editions.

This dissertation asserts that the histories of Britain's foundation and early monarchy remained malleable, contestable, and potent throughout the Middle Ages and into early modernity. As history, the chronicles provided a framework for further reading, both into the history of England and into England's place within the wider world. As Geoffrey's *Historia* was translated and adapted by late medieval chroniclers, the Britons became increasingly grounded in time and place, making them useful historical subjects, but also opening their history up to critique and comparison.

Furthermore, the dissertation re-evaluates the role that chronicle histories played in England's historical, political, and intellectual culture. By tracing the reading of history in manuscript and printed anthologies, it provides a clearer sense of how the legendary past was made real and relevant to generations of writers and readers across all strata of English society. The re-use and recombination of these manuscripts and printed books, moreover, provides a key context for explaining why, after centuries, the English continued to insist that their earliest ancestors had been the Trojans.

Readers

Professor Gabrielle Spiegel
Professor John Marshall
Professor Michael Kwass
Dr. Earle Havens
Professor Sharon Achinstein

Abbreviations

BL	London, British Library
Bodleian	Oxford, Bodleian Library
BMC XI	<i>A Catalogue of Books Printed in the XV Century now in the British Library, pt. XI - England</i> , ed. Lotte Hellinga and George Painter (t'Goy Houten:2007)
Brie, <i>The Brut</i>	<i>The Brut, or the Chronicles of England</i> , ed. F.W.D. Brie. 2 vols. <i>Early English Text Society Original Series</i> 131&136 (London: 1906-08)
HRB	<i>Geoffrey of Monmouth, The History of the Kings of Britain</i> , ed. M. Reeve and trans. N. Wright (Woodbridge: 2007)
Huntington	San Marino, CA, Huntington Library
IHP	<i>Imagining History Project</i> , Queen's University Belfast http://www.qub.ac.uk/imagining-history/resources/wiki/index.php/Main_Page (Last Accessed 3/19/2017)
Lambeth	London, Lambeth Palace Library
<i>Summary Catalogue</i>	<i>A Summary Catalogue of Western Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library at Oxford which have Hitherto not been Catalogued in the Quarto Series</i> , ed. R. W. Hunt and F. Maddan. 7 vols. (Oxford: 1895-1953)
<i>Manual VIII</i>	<i>A Manual of the Writings in Middle English, vol. VIII: Chronicles and Other Historical Writing</i> ed. E.D. Kennedy (New Haven, CT: 1990)
Matheson, <i>PB</i>	<i>The Prose Brut: The Development of a Middle English Chronicle</i> (Tempe, AZ: 1998)
Marvin, <i>Oldest</i>	<i>The Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut Chronicle: an Edition and Translation</i> (Woodbridge: 2006)
<i>Roman de Brut</i>	<i>Wace's Roman de Brut: A History of the British</i> , ed. and trans. J. Weiss. Revised ed. (Exeter: 2002)
STC	<i>A Short Title Catalogue of Books Printed in England, Scotland and Ireland, and of English Books Printed Abroad, 1475-1600</i> . 2nd ed. Revised and Enlarged by W.A. Jackson, F.S. Ferguson, and Katharine F. Pantzer. 3 vols (London: 1976-91)

Conventions

In citations to manuscripts and early printed books, foliation (fol.) refers to individually numbered leaves, with recto and verso referring to the front and back. Signatures (sig.) refer to the printed marks that described the order of each gathering, and are also cited with respect to recto and verso. Pagination, when it appears, is cited as in a modern edition.

For consistency of reference in my later chapters, I have chosen to refer to all manuscript chronicle texts of Britain's early history as *Bruts* and all printed editions of the same history as the *Chronicles of England*, unless otherwise noted.

The spelling of names is also not uniform across manuscript copies or printed editions. For ease of reference, I have retained the same usage and spelling of each early figure in Britain's history throughout.

Acknowledgments

This dissertation has left me in the happy position of having a great number of people to thank. At the top of the list is the community of scholars and students at Johns Hopkins, of which I have been fortunate to count myself a member for these past six years. My deep appreciation goes to Gabrielle Spiegel for her mentorship and keen advice at every step of the process and on every draft. After her initial triage, many of the chapters of this dissertation were presented to the European Seminar, whose members graciously gave their time and helpful suggestions to improve the finished work. Finally, I thank John Marshall, Earle Havens, Michael Kwass, and Sharon Achinstein for reading the entire work and offering their insights on it.

I am grateful to the Singleton Center for supporting both my initial research in local libraries as a Summer Libraries Fellow, as well as my research in London in Summer 2015 and 2016 through their travel fellowship. I thank Michael Burden and the fellows at New College, Oxford, for their warm companionship and welcome conversation during my stay as an Exchange Fellow in July/August, 2015. I am grateful to the Huntington Library for supporting the Oxford exchange fellowship as well as a month's worth of research in San Marino, and for the kind support and advice I received there. Special thanks are due to Vanessa Wilkie, curator of manuscripts, for allowing me to photograph MS HM 19960 in detail.

Finally, and most importantly, I thank my family, which has also grown in the years we've been in Baltimore. I thank my mom and dad for providing constant encouragement in all aspects of adult life, and for all their help over the past year. I am glad that, of the many things I am thankful to Laurel for, typing is not among them (though graphic design certainly is). Thank you for providing support, encouragement, and, when necessary, tough love, especially in the final weeks of the process. Cordelia, you have made the morals of these stories more real for me. I welcome and dread the moment when you can understand them for yourself, as you'll have one more reason to think that you're smarter than your dad.

sic vos non vobis

E.O.R.S.

Table of Contents

	Page
Abstract	ii
Abbreviations and Conventions	iii
Acknowledgments	v
List of Tables	vii
Introduction: Begin at the Beginnings	1
1. Troy's Stories: Aeneas, Antenor, and the Trojan Origins of Britain and Normandy	30
2. Enter Albina: Dominion and Domination in Fourteenth-Century England	71
3. Rule and Governance: Reading the Early History of Britain in the Middle English Prose <i>Brut</i>	119
4. Expansion and Expression: Interpreting the Early History of Britain in the Fifteenth Century	153
5. A Program of Learning for Diverse Gentlemen: Manuscript and Print, c.1480-1535	190
6. The Battle for Britain's Past	230
Conclusion: Troy Renewed	272
Table 1: Britain's Early Kings in the <i>Brut</i>	287
Bibliography	288
CV	312

List of Tables

	Page
Table 1: Britain's Early Kings in the <i>Brut</i>	287

Introduction: Begin at the Beginnings

*He holds him with his skinny hand,
'There was a ship,' quoth he.
'Hold off! unband me, grey-beard loon!
Eftsoons his hand dropt he.*

*He holds him with his glittering eye—
The Wedding-Guest stood still,
And listens like a three years' child:
The Mariner hath his will.*

Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*

“As literature, the [*Brut*] is as worthless - except for a few inserted poems - as a mediaeval chronicle possibly can be. But nobody will expect to stop a wedding-guest by reciting mediaeval history”

Friedrich W. D. Brie, *The Brut*.

Friedrich Brie's brief judgment of the chronicles now known collectively as the Middle English *Brut* stands at the beginning of the only edition of the work, now over a hundred years old. A larger introduction and description of the literary influences of the French and English chronicle tradition, also promised in Brie's scant pages, was never to appear, so the modern reader of his edition (few as there have been) is left to puzzle the connection Brie made between Coleridge's *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* and the narrative of what was, even then, recognized as one of the most prolific chronicles of late Medieval England.¹ To Brie, the manuscripts of the chronicle do seem as out of place in historical and literary study as the Mariner must have seemed to Coleridge's young wedding guest. Old, drab, and disheveled, the *Brut* manuscripts also began with an invocation to the reader to listen, and a

¹ Brie, *The Brut*, I ix-x. Brie published a brief synopsis of the versions and some of the different stories that could be found within them as *Geschichte und Quellen in der Mittelenglischen Prosachronik* *The Brut of England oder The Chronicles of England* (Marburg: 1905), yet this offered little reflection on the role the stories played in English history or literature.

promise to tell “how England was called Albion.”² The story they began with - that of a valorous group of Trojan exiles seizing Britain from demonic and gigantic inhabitants - was more than a little bizarre, and, in Brie’s mind, should have been enough for any self-respecting historian to pass on by. Stories like these were the albatross of medieval historical writing, evidence that the authors and readers of history lacked the critical judgment to ignore such superstition, or at least were complacent in passing it along to future generations.³

Yet these origin stories, like the Mariner, secured audiences, not just in late medieval England, but throughout the historical writing of late medieval Europe. How, and why, was this the case? Even among historians, as Brie would suggest, and particularly the historian who works on medieval chronicles, isn’t quite as lucky as the Ancient Mariner when it comes to dazzling his audience with captivating subject matter, but the beginnings of histories are no less significant and usually no less arresting. The origin stories which began medieval histories indicated not only where a group of people had come from, but also where that group was headed. They gave the “nations” of medieval Europe illustrious founders from antiquity and the prophetic promise of greater things to come. Although history always took *res gestae*, deeds of the past, as its subject matter, it did so in a way that would make those deeds relevant to the present moment. *Res gestae* might impart moral truths, illustrate the role of divine providence, or display fortune’s hand in the fate of a kingdom, nation, or larger community. Thus, origins formed a powerful way that medieval readers thought, understood, and incorporated historical knowledge into their daily lives.

² Brie, *The Brut*, 1 n.3.

³ An attitude encouraged in part by sixteenth-century authors wishing to distance themselves from past superstition. See A. Gransden, *Historical Writing in England vol. II: c.1307 to the Sixteenth Century* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1982); J. Levine, *Humanism and History: Origins of Modern English Historiography* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1987).

The origin story that I follow in this dissertation recounts how the earliest inhabitants of Britain had come from the ruined city of Troy, and traces their descent from the great-grandson of Aeneas, Brutus. This narrative occupied a significant place in English historical literature between the twelfth and the seventeenth centuries. Over this expanse of time, the practice of writing history expanded considerably. What began as a largely Latinate pursuit, or the entertainment of a small courtly audience, became the purview of a larger group of educated men and women, as well as the cornerstone of a virtuous and civic education. Likewise, as medieval authors and compilers expanded the historical narrative to include accounts of the Saxon, Norman, and Plantagenet kings, they also used its material to create novel forms of literary expression, from the Arthurian romance to the plays of Shakespeare. In these forms as well, ever-growing audiences encountered the origin story of Brutus and learned of the early British kings, as part of a past directly connected to their present circumstances. At each stage of its development, the meanings of Britain's origin story were contested, and even transformed, by influences from beyond its pages: texts, political and religious developments, and the efforts of its authors and readers to reconcile the constant and universal lessons of the past with a present that was far less stable and transparent.

The question at the core of this dissertation is far simpler to ask than to answer. What did it mean to be "Trojan" in medieval and early modern England? That is, how did successive generations of Englishmen and women reaffirm their relations to a distant and legendary past? What uses did they make of their illustrious origins? To even begin to answer such a question, the literary, fantastic, and popular uses of historical texts must be considered alongside their factual or intellectual ones. Looking back at the record of this origin story's use and re-use, historians are confronted with a narrative that refuses to fit

neatly into the boundaries of any one academic discipline. Yet one thing is certain. At no time should the persistence of this origin story be taken for granted. Its use represents the conscious choice of English writers and readers to invest significant time, money, and effort into preserving and expanding the narrative of Britain's founding fathers. When they listened to, read, or observed histories in the street or on the stage, they were not passively receiving knowledge, but actively appropriating it for new purposes. What emerges from a study of Britain's origin story, then, is a record of appropriation and social debate that infused politics, religion, and a growing sense of "nation," a record inscribed not only in thousands of history books but also on the very landscape of England itself.

This process began in the twelfth century with Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae* and its early translations, which is where I will begin as well. It was at the end of the medieval period, in the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, that the story of Brutus attained its highest circulation. The deeds of the early Britons could be read in poetry as well as prose, in vernacular versions as well as in Latin. The history book that would have been most frequently encountered during this time was an anonymous Middle English chronicle known to us today as the *Brut*. As with many medieval chronicles, the *Brut* was connected to its medieval antecedents by a series of translations and compilations, and thus stands at the head of a long tradition of medieval writing in Latin and in the vernacular. It served as the basis for a number of printed editions, and thus as a key foundation for the further evolution of Britain's Trojan origin narrative in the sixteenth century. Thus, while I will refer to and compare the origin narrative found in the *Brut* with that of other chronicles and works of literature, the Middle English prose *Brut* forms the core of my study.

From the beginning of its circulation, the narrative of English history found in the *Brut* was a platform: a vehicle for the negotiation of current instabilities through the examples of past rulers.⁴ It never sought to create a perfectly unified Britain or England. From a genealogical point of view, it presented the series of ruptures, conquests, and breaks in the succession of British, Saxon, Norman/Angevin, and Plantagenet kings in a unified narrative, yet it stopped short of insisting on their uniformity. This open framework may have been the *Brut*'s (and indeed the medieval chronicle's) greatest asset, because its reinterpretation did not require explicit rewriting. As I will demonstrate, the general narrative of English history that it came to offer by the fifteenth century could be expanded, augmented, and argued against by means of other texts.

The range of this expansion is hinted at in Brie's two volumes edition the *Brut*. Brie's first volume identified a common early narrative (to around 1337) for the roughly 120 then known manuscripts, but due to the multiple and varied continuations, contained either in individual manuscripts or groups, he described the remainder of the *Brut* as "a chronicle, or rather a series of chronicles."⁵ The content of the continuations would fuel debate and drive the study of the *Brut* for the decades to come. C.L. Kingsford, the next to examine the *Brut* in connection with other forms of fifteenth-century historical writing, dismissed the early parts of the *Brut* (its narrative of the legendary British kings) as irrelevant to historical study.⁶ Antonia Gransden, in her magisterial survey of historical writing in England, went so far as to merge the *Brut* with later efforts and civic chronicles, a mistake which further studies of

⁴ G. Spiegel, "History, Historicism, and the Social Logic of the Text in the Middle Ages," *Speculum* 65, no. 1 (1990): 59-86, 74.

⁵ Brie, *The Brut*, II, v.

⁶ C. Kingsford, *English Historical Literature in the Fifteenth Century* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1913), 113.

the London city chronicles have repeated.⁷ Alternatively, the sparse and anonymous nature of the *Brut*'s continuation made it difficult to incorporate within subsequent studies of fifteenth-century authors, or in trends in historical writing.⁸

The textual tradition of the *Brut* was revitalized by Lister Matheson, who undertook a more expansive survey of the surviving manuscripts, categorizing the 183 fifteenth- and sixteenth-century copies into several distinct textual groups.⁹ The stability of Matheson's categories, when compared to those outlined for the London city chronicles, is striking, and advances the argument that a distinct tradition of historical writing had developed around the vernacular *Brut*. At the same time, his study also showed how earlier manuscripts might be continued from later exempla by locating the parts of each book in different categories, allowing for the possibility of change over time. Matheson's work inspired renewed investigation into the sources of the Middle English text, and thus into the Anglo-Norman antecedents of the *Brut* and a tradition of vernacular writing that stretched back to the twelfth century.¹⁰ Matheson's work on the final continuation of the *Brut*, which appeared in the first printed edition of the *Brut*, William Caxton's 1480 *Chronicles of England*, suggested a further avenue for study that I have been pursuing since I began work on the manuscripts of the *Brut*.¹¹

⁷ A. Gransden, *Historical Writing II*, 220-48, esp. 226; M. McLaren *The London Chronicles of the Fifteenth Century: A Revolution in English Writing* (Woodbridge: DS Brewer, 2002).

⁸ C. Given-Wilson, *Chronicles: The Writing of History in Late Medieval England* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004); P. Damian-Grint, *The New Historians of the Twelfth-Century Renaissance: Inventing Vernacular Authority* (Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer, 1999).

⁹ Lister Matheson, *The Prose Brut: the Development of an English Chronicle* (Tempe, AZ: Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies, 1998).

¹⁰ R. Dean, *Anglo-Norman Literature: A Guide to Texts and Manuscripts* (London: Anglo-Norman Text Society, 1999) 30-33; J. Marvin, *The Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut Chronicle* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2006) and "Sources and Analogues of the Middle English Prose *Brut*," *Trivium* 36 (2006) 1-31.

¹¹ Matheson, "Printer and Scribe: Caxton, the *Polychronicon* and the *Brut*" *Speculum* (1989): 593-614. N. Weijer, "Compilation, Presentation, and Circulation of the Middle English Prose *Brut* Chronicle, c.1480-1500," (Unpublished MPhil Thesis, Cambridge University 2010); D. Wakelin "Caxton's Exemplar for the *Chronicles*

The textual study of the *Brut*, however, remained focused on expansion and addition, and with no further continuations suggested by the surviving manuscripts, the chronicle's lifespan, it seemed, had run its course by the end of the fifteenth century. Its manuscript production slowed, and its printed editions were replaced by other, newer printed chronicles in the sixteenth. Yet other approaches to the *Brut* suggest the continued development of the chronicle as a whole, both within and beyond the medieval period. The large corpus of surviving manuscripts has since invited work on the scribes that produced the individual texts, as well as the reception data that could be culled from them.¹² These approaches to authors, texts, and readers provide interesting insights into elements of the *Brut*'s reception, and most importantly suggest that uses of the history were not confined to the new material that had been added.¹³ However, the peculiarities of particular copies and readers have thus far reinforced the idea that there was a different sort of *Brut* for each individual reader and seem to undermine studies of the *Brut*'s historiographical development and significance.

More importantly, these studies remain, almost exclusively, manuscript studies, and since a large proportion of the annotation in these books comes from sixteenth-century readers, printed editions (which would have been circulating alongside the manuscripts) are ignored as a valuable additional asset, a problem which my dissertation will attempt to correct. Particularly in regards to bibliography and the history of the book, the links between

of England?" *JEBs* 14 (2011) 75-113; M. Takagi, "Caxton's Exemplar and a Copy from Caxton's Edition of the Chronicles of England," *Arthuriana* 22 (2012) 120-139; N. Weijer "Re-Printing or Remaking? The Early Printed Editions of the *Chronicles of England*," in *The Prose Brut and other Late Medieval Chronicles: Books Have their Histories*, ed. J. Rajsic, D. Hoche, and E. Kooper (Woodbridge: York Medieval Press, 2016), 125-46.

¹² L. Matheson and L. Mooney, "The 'Beryn' Scribe and His Texts: Evidence for Multiple-Copy Production of Manuscripts in Fifteenth-Century England," *The Library*, ns 4 (2003) 347-70; E. Stubbs and L. Mooney, *Scribes and the City: London Guildhall Clerks and the Dissemination of Middle English Literature, 1375-1425* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2013); A wiki of descriptions of many of the *Brut* manuscripts is available online through the *Imagining History Project* (<http://www.qub.ac.uk/imagining-history/wordpress/>). See, most recently, the essays in J. Rajsic, D. Hoche, and E. Kooper eds. *The Prose Brut and other Late Medieval English Chronicles*, (Woodbridge: York Medieval Press, 2016)

¹³ A. Hiatt, "Historical Writing," in A.S.G. Edwards ed. *A Companion to Middle English Prose* (Cambridge: DS Brewer, 2004) 175-194.

manuscript and print have long been recognized and are currently being given closer attention.¹⁴ Along with the compilation of printed books, the writing and reading of sixteenth-century chronicles in particular has become a subject for detailed investigation.¹⁵ Yet the same interest has not been systematically applied to the “medieval” chronicles which served as their source-texts and reading companions for the works of Stowe and Holinshed.

I. History and Story, Text and Book

If it is clearer to us today why historians should engage with the origin stories in medieval histories, a larger issue remains how we should go about it. That is to say, how does one historicize a history that never happened? The very term “origin story” (sometimes the more intellectually rigorous origin narrative) suggests two problems for historians from the outset. What is the relationship of this “story” to the writing of history? How should we address the ambiguities between the two terms?¹⁶ In the later Middle Ages, there was certainly nothing resembling our own independent academic discipline of history. Historical writing belonged to a larger subset of educational and entertaining literature, and across the entire scope of this dissertation there were no professional qualifications for “historians.” Rather, people read histories as part of their basic education, and a smaller subset wrote

¹⁴ See especially J. Boffey, *Manuscript and Print in London: c.1475-1530* (London: British Library, 2012) and the essays in *The Medieval Manuscript Book: Cultural Approaches*, ed. M. Johnson and M. Van Dussen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015).

¹⁵ See, for example, E. Evenden and T. Freeman, *Religion and the Book in Early Modern England: The Making of Foxe's Book of Martyrs* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011); A. Patterson, *Reading Holinshed's Chronicles* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994); N. Popper, *Sir Walter Raleigh's History of the World and the Historical Culture of the Late Renaissance* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press 2012).

¹⁶ Numerous attempts have been made to address this question from the point of view of medieval literature. See, for example, S. Flieschman, “On the Representation of Truth and Fiction in the Middle Ages,” *History and Theory* 22 (1983): 278-310; P. Ainsworth, “Legendary History, *historia* and *fabula*,” in D. Deliyannis ed. *Historiography in the Middle Ages* (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 387-416. and M. Otter, “The Functions of Fiction in Historical Writing,” in N. Partner ed, *Writing Medieval History* (London: Oxford University Press, 2005), 109-130.

histories as an outgrowth both of their learning and of their own desire to explain the world around them. Guidelines for historical writing, aside from the basic commandment of truthfulness, were in a state of flux, and often depended upon an individual historian's take on the models he had to hand. If the practice of history reading and history writing was more nebulous than it is today, it also held greater influence, as we shall see, for many different forms of thought.

In the main, historians of the early twentieth century and their predecessors were not inclined to emphasize the historical nature of medieval origin stories. In the English tradition, for example, the ancient origins of the Britons struck many historians as too “long ago and far away,” that is, more suited to imaginative literature than the pursuit of recorded and verifiable fact.¹⁷ In surveys of England's historical tradition, Britain's Trojan origins often serve as a fanciful invention of the medieval period, a useful litmus test for the credibility of medieval writers, perhaps, but a concoction that could not survive even the earliest forms of critical inquiry brought on by early modern humanism, and an aberration in the historical record that was soon set straight.¹⁸ My first two chapters will explore this subject in greater detail, but for now I will emphasize that the main objection modern historians had to medieval origin narratives—the lack of surviving documentation—was of critical concern for medieval historians as well, and had been since the first attempts to compile a “universal” history. If the inhabitants of Britain had not come from Troy or, going back even further, from Adam, where *had* they come from?

¹⁷ R. Southern, "Aspects of the European Tradition of Historical Writing," in *History and Historians: Collected Papers of R.W. Southern*, ed. Robert Bartlett (Oxford: Blackwell, 2004), 11-83, at 28.

¹⁸ J. Levine, *Humanism and History: The Origins of Modern English Historiography* (Utica, NY: Cornell University Press, 1984); D. Woolf, *The Social Circulation of the Past: English Historical Culture 1500-1730* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 5-6.

Over the past few decades, the transformative role that documents played in administration and the function of society has been much more fully appreciated by historians. Since the publication of M.T. Clanchy's *From Memory to Written Record*, which first appeared in 1982, numerous studies of medieval documents, some drawing on older diplomatic practices and forgeries, have explored the shift in mindset that accompanied a more expansive use of writing.¹⁹ Indeed, it appears that the lack of documentation was as much a problem for medieval historians as it was for medieval administrators, since the upswing in recordkeeping, particularly in the Anglo-Norman empire, also coincided with an amazing surge in the production of Latin and vernacular histories, many of which relied upon Trojan origins to fill in the gaps of a pre-Roman past. These stories, inventions to be sure, were not drawn from any single source, but likely came from a variety of literate and pre-literate models. In other words, it is not fair to say that oral tradition was simply written down. Rather, as it was written, it interacted with a variety of literary models – epic in the formulation of the Aeneid, as well as Christian and “pagan” histories of the peoples descended from these ancient ancestors.

If the removal of these origin stories from contemporary records signals a move out of the comfort zone of historians, it is perhaps not surprising that literature has been the discipline to take origin stories the most seriously. The study of history as narrative owes its roots to twentieth-century theories of linguistics and to an increasingly contextualized critical stance among literature scholars. In particular, the theories of Michel de Certeau and Mikhail Bakhtin have provided approaches to studying the logic of literary production in history, as

¹⁹ M. Clanchy, *From Memory to Written Record: England 1066-1307*, 3rd ed (Oxford: Blackwell, 2012). See also W. Ong, *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word* (London: Meuthen, 1982); R. McKitterick, *The Carolingians and the Written Word* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989); A. Blair, *Too Much to Know: Managing Scholarly Information before the Modern Age* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2011).

they called closer attention to the interpretative work performed by historians on all of their sources.²⁰ Studying all of history as story, in other words, makes it easier to integrate the legendary beginnings of historical writing with their contemporary conclusions.

If literary criticism has provided the historian with some useful tools for studying origin stories, there are still some modifications that need to be made to these instruments. First and foremost, histories are different from other stories in their interactions both with other histories and present realities. In the epic, and especially in Bakhtin's view of the novel, the plot is self-contained: valid as long as it corresponds to its own internal set of rules.²¹ A novel set in New York, for example, may describe the city accurately. It may even rely upon "real" (i.e. historical) events. Yet these events or settings are not as important to the reader or listener as the overall plot of the story. Likewise, the expressive medieval romance abstracts its subjects into self-contained stories within the realm of the forest. The adventures of Arthur's knights or the redemption of Havelock the Dane may take place in parallel, yet distinct worlds from those inhabited by their audiences.

Histories, and especially historical origin narratives, do not enjoy this luxury. They are always implicitly or explicitly connected to reference points outside of the narrative: to the founding of cities, to territories, if not to living dynasties.²² While Brutus may be the hero of Britain's origin narrative, Francoise Le Saux has pointed out, the land of England became the real focus of the history as successive translators modified and extended Geoffrey of Monmouth's narrative. The translators also used differences in language to move back

²⁰ M. de Certeau, *On the Writing of History*, tr. T. Conley, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992). M. Bakhtin, "Epic and Novel," in *The Dialogic Imagination*, ed. M. Holquist (Austin, University of Texas Press, 1981) 3-40.

²¹ Bakhtin, "Epic and Novel," 32-33.

²² de Certeau makes this point with explicit reference to other historical texts (*Writing of History*, 43) but I believe that it can be further expanded into other types of literature and into the physical and social environment.

through the ages, undoing the “corruption” of the successive conquerors and returning to the original, self-explanatory, naming of a place or a people.²³ Likewise, as historians built upon existing models, they also entered into competition with them: claiming primacy of one particular group of people over another, for example, by inverting elements of a prevailing history in calculated ways. While it was possible, perhaps to retreat into the forests of romance or the inner chamber of the mind while reading some forms of literature, history pulled the reader out into the wider world, refusing to be read in a social, or even a literary vacuum. Even in our current hyper-literate society, we do not live in texts or compartmentalize them. Instead, we bring them to bear on one another, attempting to reconcile them with our existing experience and expectations. This was the case for medieval society as well.

This dissertation covers a wide range of historiographical ground, due in part to its crossing of disciplinary boundaries, historical periods, and the broad nature of its inquiry into ‘historical’ writing. In its discussion of current historiography and thought on history writing in the medieval and early modern periods, a key contribution of the dissertation will be not reinvention, but harmonization of the literature across both periods. Over the past few decades, parallel narratives have developed in medieval and early modern studies concerning attitudes towards historical writing, “popular” narratives, and the cultural aspects of history, most notably the production, circulation, and reception of manuscripts and printed books.²⁴ The continuous use of the *Brut* in manuscript and print across both periods

²³ F. Le Saux, *A Companion to Wace* (Cambridge: DS Brewer, 2005), 280.

²⁴ See Boffey, *Manuscript and Print*, 125-51; H. Love, *The Culture and Commerce of Texts: Scribal Publication in Seventeenth Century England* (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 1998); D. McKitterick, *Print, Manuscript and the Search for Order 1450-1850* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

provides an important platform upon which to base the study of medieval and early modern historical culture.²⁵

In demonstrating the parallels between history and literature, manuscript and print, medieval and early modern, I do not, it must be emphasized, wish to claim one body of literature for the other. That is to say, I am not interested in arguing that the early modern period became more “medieval,” or argue that history was the primary lesson read or heard from a medieval romance. My subject is a “medieval” chronicle that became an “early modern” one when sixteenth century readers exposed it to their own political, social, and mental environments. In fact, describing the *Brut* as a “medieval,” or even a fifteenth-century chronicle masks its own position in a series of revisions, translations, and expansions beginning in the twelfth century and moving steadily forward. Viewed from this perspective, it is less surprising that the narrative contained in the *Brut* continued to mutate and evolve into the sixteenth century, even when it was not explicitly updated via the addition of new material. Old stories, it must be remembered, never remain the same, and it is this very dynamism that makes them worth the telling.

Perhaps the strongest current that runs through the entire project is its pursuit of a story through both a series of texts and the books that contain them. From the point of view of the texts, the general paradigm has been either to investigate them in terms of their own manuscript tradition—following in the footsteps of earlier editors and cataloguers and commenting on their individual narrative and sources—or to study them thematically by period, language, or form. Thus, in the twelfth century, we may find the Trojan origins of Britain treated at great length, either in studies that focus on its translation, historical

²⁵ Woolf, *Social Circulation*, 9.

elements, or even its translation between the genres of history and romance.²⁶ However, in these studies the varied works of insular Anglo-Norman writers are not often discussed in connection with their continental counterparts, or more commonly, vernacular adaptations of the Trojan origin narrative may not be considered alongside Latin ones.²⁷ Furthermore, the longer the tradition of rewriting, the less "new" the Trojan origin narrative became. It was transformed into a "source," worthy, perhaps of *auctoritas*, but a building block rather than a new literary invention, as the *Brut* tradition appears to illustrate.

In the sixteenth century and, indeed, even in the latter part of the fifteenth, new influences in education and evidence suggested that the writing of history was changing significantly. The dominance of the monastic chronicler, the historian *par excellence* of the fourteenth century, gradually gave way to the writings of the civic chronicler, the professional scribe, the antiquarian, and most importantly for the sixteenth century, the critical Latin humanist.²⁸ The intellectual environment of the sixteenth century, it has been argued, rejected the older "medieval" forms of historical writing, and particularly the chronicle.²⁹ Even though the traditional uses of history—rhetorical education, moral exempla, and present efficacy—still persisted, and indeed, the notion of civic or patriotic virtue became attached to histories, the origin stories that had sprung from Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia* occupied an uneasy place in the new world of critical analysis, classical eloquence, and most importantly, an emphasis on Roman or European sources.

²⁶ R. Hanning, *The Vision of History in Early Britain: from Gildas to Geoffrey of Monmouth* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996); R. Stein, *Reality Fictions: Romance, History and Governmental Authority 1025-1180* (South Bend, IN: Notre Dame University Press, 2006); J. Blacker, *Faces of Time: Portrayal of the Past in Old French and Latin Historical Narrative of the Anglo-Norman Regnum* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1994).

²⁷ E. Albu, *The Normans in their Histories: Propaganda, Myth, and Subversion* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2001); L. Shopkow, *History and Community: Norman Historical Writing in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1997).

²⁸ A. Gransden, *Legends, Traditions, and History in Medieval England* (London: Hambledon Press, 1993).

²⁹ F. Levy, *Tudor Historical Thought*. 2nd ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004) original printing 1967.; M. McKisack, *Medieval History in the Tudor Age* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971); D. Hay, *Polydore Vergil: Renaissance Historian and Man of Letters* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1952).

However, we know that societies, and particularly readers, are not one-dimensional or monolithic, and the same goes for the texts they used and produced. Indeed, this problem of perceived stasis resembles the debate over "fixity" in printed works.³⁰ Over the past decades historians have engaged a wider study of the construction of texts, looking for clues to their reading in the social conditions and aspirations of their writers, as well as the material logic of the manuscript book.³¹ The study of "sources" is also beginning to admit more flexibility. Helen Cooper's study of romance motifs over time conceives of these stories not as building blocks, diverging from the formalism of folklore or mythological studies, but as "memes," ideas which she claims take on a development of their own.³² While historians of the early modern period would suggest that "free-floating ideas" are rather developed and reshaped by a changing society, as the field of historical evidence has broadened to include genres of romance, literature, theater, and antiquarianism, so too have studies of "historical writing" given way to surveys of "historical thought."³³ However, the subject of these sixteenth-century studies, like the medieval surveys of literature, remain focused on new production. Re-use proves a harder topic for investigation along solely textual lines.

Along with greater appreciation of the uses of historical writing has come a wider awareness of the book and its contents as evidence for historical study. Beginning with the study of medieval manuscripts, scholars have discovered order and innovation where

³⁰ E. Eisenstein, *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change: Cultural Transformations in Early Modern Europe*, 2 vols (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press: 1979), 43-71. A. Johns, *The Nature of the Book: Print Culture and Knowledge in the Making*. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1998).

³¹ G. Spiegel, *Romancing the Past: the Rise of Vernacular Prose Historiography in Thirteenth-Century France* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1993); and "Social Logic," 74-76.

³² H. Cooper, *The English Romance in Time: Transforming Motifs from Geoffrey of Monmouth to Shakespeare* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2004), 3.

³³ See the essays by P. Kewes and D. Woolf in P. Kewes ed., *The Uses of History in Early Modern England* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2006).

previously repetition and reiteration were thought to have reigned. The first advances in this field came in the fields of paleography and codicology, as the medieval scribe, the producer of books, came to be known through his writing, decoration, and working methods.³⁴ Further investigation into the economic and geographic distribution of manuscripts in the fifteenth century advanced our sense of the many hands that combined to make the book trade.³⁵ Finally, advances in digitization have enabled collaborative research projects to reunite the products of collaborative scribal activity and search for new connections between books.³⁶

Similar developments were taking place with the study of printed books. The appearance and growth of print had been a widely studied phenomenon, to which wide-ranging social consequences had been ascribed. Beginning with Lucien Febvre and Henri-Jean Martin's *L'apparition du livre*, a world of studies of "the book" and its consequences grew up alongside, and yet only rarely in dialogue with, the work that was taking place on the social impact of manuscript circulation.³⁷ Studies of incunabula grew out of early censuses of collections and editions which, unlike manuscripts, could be catalogued in ways more familiar to librarians. These studies focused on printers, (particularly on William Caxton in England) printing materials, and printing methods, as well as on the transitional techniques

³⁴ M.B. Parkes, *Their Hands Before Our Eyes: A Closer Look at Scribes* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008); R. and M. Rouse, *Authentic Witnesses: Approaches to Medieval Texts and Manuscripts* (South Bend, IN: Notre Dame University Press, 1991).

³⁵ J. Griffiths and D. Pearsall, *Book Production and Publishing in Britain 1375-1475* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989); D. Wakelin and A. Gillespie eds. *The Production of Books in England 1300-1500* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011) L. Hellenga and J. B. Trapp eds., *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain, vol. 3: 1400-1557* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

³⁶ For example, the University of York's *Late Medieval English Scribes* (<https://www.medievalscribes.com/>).

³⁷ L. Febvre and H. Martin, *The Coming of the Book: The Impact of Printing 1450-1800*, tr. David Gerard (London: NLB, 1976); R. Chartier, *The Order of Books: Readers, Authors, and Libraries in Europe between the Fourteenth and the Eighteenth Centuries*, tr. L. Cochrane, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994); R. Darnton, "What is the History of Books?" *Daedalus* 111 (1982): 65-83 and *idem* "What is the History of Books? Revisited," *Modern Intellectual History* 4 (2007): 495-508.

that printers adapted from manuscript production.³⁸ However, the implication was that the move from manuscript to printed production of books was largely one-way. The larger economics of book production and the broader networks of trade and exchange that developed around the printed book trade also came under sharper review.³⁹

Moving from the production to the reception side of book studies has been a more difficult and less exact proposition. The distribution of both manuscripts and printed books has given rise to speculation about the groups of people who engaged with them, either due to their relative expense or, more commonly, due to the ownership and readership information inscribed in individual copies. However, both printed and manuscript books were recognized at a relatively early stage to be objects around which groups of individuals could revolve.⁴⁰ Using primarily printed material, Daniel Woolf has integrated the availability of new types of historical writing with the social and cultural context of their suspected readers and owners, in order to give a larger picture of the use of a genre of texts.⁴¹ The focus on the new, as in the writing and continuing of the *Brut*, may obscure how much “old” material was still in active circulation, and an important contribution of my thesis to this work is to re-incorporate an “older” text (the *Brut*) as well as “older” stories in that text (the legendary origins of England) into the extremely productive discussion of evolution and experimentation that has come to characterize history writing. The writings of Bill Sherman have been influential in the understanding of both manuscripts and printed books, for they

³⁸ BMC XI 19-65; S. Hindman and J. Farquahr *Pen to Press: Illustrated Manuscripts and Printed Books in the First Century of Printing* (College Park, MD: University of Maryland Press, 1977); L. Hellinga, *Caxton in Focus: The Beginning of Printing in England* (London: British Library 1982); McKitterick, *Search for Order*, 26-52.

³⁹ J. Raven, *The Business of Books: Booksellers and the English Book Trade 1450-1850* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007); A. Pettigree, *The Book in the Renaissance* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2011).

⁴⁰ B. Stock, *Listening for the Text: On the Uses of the Past* (Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 1997); A. Grafton and L. Jardine, “Studied for Action: How Gabriel Harvey Read His Livy” *Past & Present* 129 (1990) 30-78.

⁴¹ D. Woolf, *Reading History in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

combine studies of practice (reading, marking books) with case studies of readers who collected and used both forms.⁴²

In the main, the production of history is still a much easier subject for both of these topics to address than its reception, to say nothing of the changing meanings that must have occurred when old books were re-read by subsequent generations.⁴³ This is a particular problem for origin stories, which often circulated in many different forms simultaneously, and for history more generally. Daniel Woolf, looking at the production of historical material in the early modern period, offers the formulation that “the very nature of historical knowledge was such that it was intended to be socially circulated: once read in a book, it was supposed to be put to practical moral or political use, talked about, shared with friends and family, and interactively revised and reshaped by the reader.”⁴⁴ A look at origin stories across the medieval and early modern periods can show this process in action, just as it may illustrate the changes in the social, as well as the material logic of the book.

My aim is to combine both approaches to studying origin stories, producing a clearer picture of their meanings, production, and their reception in medieval and early modern England. If history could, and did, fill the critical roles of teacher and entertainer, providing society with a language to discuss their past and present alike, an interdisciplinary approach is necessary not only to follow, but to appreciate the storied history of origin stories themselves. The Trojan origins of Britain inspired generations of writing and thought about

⁴² B. Sherman, *Used Books: Marking Readers in Renaissance England* (Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009); John Dee: *The Politics of Reading in the English Renaissance* (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 1997).

⁴³ M. Johnson and M. Van Dussen, “Introduction: Manuscripts and Cultural History,” in *The Medieval Manuscript Book*, ed. *ibidem* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015) 1-16, 4-5. They rightly stress that the study of manuscripts, like their creation, should be viewed as a process. (6-8) This point applies equally well to printed books, despite the authors’ attempts to stress the differences between “manuscript culture” and that of print.

⁴⁴ Woolf, *Reading History*, 79-80.

history, politics, religion, and education, among an ever-growing number of readers. From the time of Geoffrey of Monmouth to that of Shakespeare, the story was translated into different languages, new and different genres of historical writing, and into public display and the architecture of cities. All of these different venues, likewise, provided various ways that the ancient past could be encountered, recalled, and put to use.

II. Recombinant History in the Chronicle Tradition

Taking a broader view of the reading and writing of history requires looking at literary and bibliographical methods in a more expansive way. In order to provide a clear view of a text, the methods inherited from textual and literary criticism are deliberately limiting in their attempts to pinpoint the direct transmission of a text from one copy to another. Anyone familiar with manuscript stemmata will be familiar with the filiative links between one manuscript and its parent, as well as with the “missing” or “lost” texts that this model relies upon to produce a text’s family tree. On the other hand, literary criticism offers a perspective that is potentially broader, allowing thematic connections between works, but it relies upon a chosen iteration of a constant theme, while minimizing the contingencies of time and place on the theme itself.⁴⁵

Both of these modes of interpretation rely upon a stable text or theme by which the variations may be judged, and just as they limit the amount of material under analysis, they also tend to categorize excessive variation as error or corruption. From the point of view of bibliography, the ideal scribe was an exact copyist, capable of reproducing a single text with a

⁴⁵ See, for example, William Kuskin’s attempts to define the problem of material culture and authorship in *Recursive Origins: Writing at the Transition to Modernity* (South Bend, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2013) 19-50. Cooper, *English Romance*, 2-12.

minimal amount of error. A bibliographical approach can illustrate much about the production of an artifact, and perhaps changes wrought by successive owners, yet these small snapshots do not provide a picture of a book's continued use and evolution over time.

When these techniques are exported to the historian or critic, they tend to produce a narrow view of large trends in texts. In some cases, the variations and corruptions lend the impression that medieval and early modern readers “misread” their books (or use the wrong ones) when their interpretations differ from those of the modern critic.⁴⁶ Studies that use books to illustrate literary phenomena also tend to freeze the books in time at the moment of their production or, possibly, their use by an effusive or illustrious reader, without taking into account the changes present in the rest of the object. In both literary and bibliographical analysis, therefore, text (in a manuscript) and book (the object that contains it) tend to remain fixed through time, and assessed in relation to an artificial constant, either the editorial “text” or the theme of literary analysis. Neither ideal is realizable, but readers and scribes are assessed by how closely they are able to approximate them.

Recently, however, scholarship on medieval scribes has emphasized the agency that these actors enjoyed in shaping texts as well as literary tastes.⁴⁷ Particularly in populous areas such as late medieval London, collaborative scribal work brought a multitude of texts into conversation even as it broke those works down into smaller segments that could be more easily copied. It now appears that, as with the activity of medieval translators, some scribes were not entirely dependent on the copy-text in front of them. They could freely embellish

⁴⁶ D. Wakelin, *Humanism, Reading, and English Literature 1430-1530* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007). S. Federico, *New Troy: Fantasies of Empire in the Late Middle Ages*, *Medieval Cultures* 36 (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2003) xvi-xvii.

⁴⁷ M. Fisher, *Scribal Authorship and the Writing of History in Medieval England* (Columbus, OH: Ohio State University Press, 2012). Ralph Hanna takes a slightly more negative view of the effects of scribal culture on texts in “Authorial Versions, Rolling Revision, Scribal Error? Or, the Truth about *Truth*,” in *Pursuing History: Middle English Manuscripts and Their Texts* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1996), 159-73, at 161.

and annotate a text based on past work, in practice becoming more like the authors, compilers, and readers of medieval texts than the means of production.⁴⁸ In the past few years, a growing number of bibliographers and historians have suggested that this phenomenon is not restricted to scribal production, but extends to printed texts and their producers as well.⁴⁹

Recombination is, I believe, a better term for the production and reception of medieval and early modern texts. In genetics, recombination is the process through which, intentionally or naturally, traits appear in offspring that were not present in either parent. When applied to the transmission and, especially, the reception of texts, recombination assumes that there is extra information, in the form of contextual material or knowledge, in the mind of a compiler or reader when he or she interacts with a text.⁵⁰ The ultimate source of the material is not as important as its expression within an individual or, more convincingly, a group of works.

Put another way, recombination attempts to account for the realities of reading and compiling texts in the premodern age, by acknowledging that the producers, sellers, and readers of history books did not encounter them as isolated “texts” but rather as material that taught, expanded, and enriched their understanding of history. In Jeffrey Todd Knight’s

⁴⁸ Two of the most famous being Chaucer’s scribe “Adam,” identified as Adam Pinkhurst, a London Guildhall scribe. (Mooney and Stubbs, *Scribes and the City*, 66-85) and the London anthologist John Shirley. See M. Connolly, *John Shirley: Book Production and the Noble Household in Fifteenth-Century England* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998); A.I. Doyle “More Light on John Shirley,” *Medium Aevum* 30 (1967): 93-101.

⁴⁹ A. Gillespie, *Print Culture and the Medieval Author: Chaucer, Lydgate, and their Books, 1473-1557* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006); J. Knight, “Organizing Manuscript and Print: from *Compilatio* to Compilation,” in *The Medieval Manuscript Book*, ed. Johnston and Van Dussen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 77-95.

⁵⁰ Recombination, as with all genetic metaphors, is limited in that it seeks to construct an entire system out of the artifact itself. The notion of Assemblage or Actor-Network Theory holds promise here, as it requires us to examine the user of an artifact or object as part of the necessary conditions for use. See M. Muller, “Assemblages and Actor-networks: Rethinking Socio-material Power, Politics and Space,” *Geography Compass* 9 (2015): 27-41 and B. Latour, *Reassembling the Social: an Introduction to Actor-Network Theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

formulation, these items were read “not as a modern *book*, but as a premodern *work*, an always-potential sub-unit, and a compilation for compilations.”⁵¹ The conceptions of history present in these works included the genealogical succession of Britain (later England’s) monarchy, as well as the moral and practical lessons to be drawn from the activities of the monarchs. The supernatural, or in their view, the metaphysical, also had a place within historical learning, as did the rhetorical flair of poetry and the visual spectacle of pageantry or heraldry. My approach considers these works in relation to historical texts, not because it is the only way they could be interpreted, but because it is clear that their use did, in turn, give rise to new developments within the writing of texts which they classified as historical. Historians, critics, and to a lesser extent, bibliographers alike have appreciated that variation in texts does not necessarily make them unique (or defective). Recombination provides a way of addressing variation in a group of texts without, necessarily, looking for a literary antecedent (parent) that could have provided the variation. This information, where it exists, is valuable, but should not be the sole factor that determines whether historians interested in the evolution of historical thought can, or should investigate the contents of a book.

Such an approach is not without its complications. Terminology becomes an issue when similar historical narratives circulate under distinct titles or, as in the case of the work we now call the Middle English Prose *Brut*, sometimes lack titles altogether. Just as copies of texts differ in their aims and backgrounds, the ideological assumptions and the intellectual backgrounds of their readers are also wildly disparate. However, the benefits to this approach outweigh the interpretative risks. By embracing variation and variety as part of the process of reading, learning, and writing, historians are able to explain the emergence of different inflections of history in ways that accommodate more of the social and intellectual

⁵¹ Knight, “*Compilatio* to Compilation,” 88.

circumstances of their time. If the interpretation of texts over time represents a series of moving targets to be hit, recombination offers a perspective that does not completely unify the targets, but instead illustrates similar ways in which they may be struck.

III. The Evolution of a Story

My dissertation examines the impact of Britain's Trojan origin narrative by placing it in an expanding series of contexts (both historical and material) from the twelfth century onward. I begin with an analysis of the origin narrative in the twelfth century, drawing out the major themes of the Trojans highlighted by Geoffrey of Monmouth and his early translators. At this point, the Trojan Britons symbolized freedom from outside domination, military valor, and their divine claim to the island they inhabited. Moving forward, I focus on periods of concentrated historiographical activity, during which new versions of the origin narrative arose and competed with older ones. Many of these historical moments are characterized by conflict, instability, and uncertainty, and would have been the times when the most commonly acknowledged social function of Britain's origin story—territorial dominance—was at play.

The second chapter examines the fourteenth century addition of a “prologue” to the origin story of the Britons that found its way into the vernacular *Bruts*, and remained influential in the reading of England's history through the fifteenth century. This story explained why Geoffrey's Britons had landed on an island named Albion by giving the island an earlier series of inhabitants: the Syrian princess Albina and her thirty-three sisters. The Albina story relates how the unruliness and, particularly the lasciviousness of these women led them to demonic intercourse and ultimately produced giants which the Trojans later

defeated. In contrast to many of the literary scholars who have studied the story as a “pre-foundation myth,” I survey its development across linguistic and historical barriers. I trace two important contributions of the story to England’s history—the concern over territory and the criticism of overbearing medieval queens—over a longer period of time, and demonstrate how both evolved along with the *Brut*.

The third, fourth, and fifth chapters deal directly with the circulation of the *Brut* in the mid to late fifteenth century, demonstrating how different groups of readers interpreted its origin narrative with the help of a wide variety of other texts. The third chapter investigates how the episodes of Britain’s early history could be read together or as standalone units, and how the presence of additional texts and scribal apparatus could be brought to bear on the reading of history. The fourth chapter examines the translation of the *Brut* back and forth from Latin. These manuscripts incorporated elements of previous Latin scholarship, as well as rhetorical flourishes like short poems. They reveal a readership comfortable with texts in both languages. The fifth chapter follows the same processes of compilation and anthologizing, but incorporating printed books and the exchange between print and manuscript. All three chapters position chronicle history as a foundation for learning of all types, as well as a framework that inspired readers to enrich its narrative with new information.

Finally, the sixth chapter examines the use of the story in the sixteenth century, as groups of antiquarians and political advisers looked back over the “ancient” sources of Britain’s history to re-make a past for the newly Protestant country. Using the most current critical methods available, these men looked back over all of the records they could find to

determine what of Britain's legendary past could be preserved, and created new definitions of what it meant to write history in the process.

From this, three main conclusions may be drawn. The first is that origin narratives are malleable and contestable. While their meanings in history invoke common themes: antiquity, legitimacy, and freedom among them, those meanings are modified by the circumstances in which origins are written down and read. In their recording and reading, history books, as well as their texts, become complex sites of negotiation where some of the most fundamental questions of society are posed and debated. The English tradition of Trojan origins, as I will indicate, grew up alongside and partly in opposition to Norman and French instances of Trojan origins. As the reading of history inspired new writing, authors at different times and in different places saw cooperation or competition between the narratives. Thus, though we might find the "same" story, in terms of its basic outline or even its exact language, in two different works at two different times, it could never mean exactly the same thing.

A second important point emerges in conjunction with the first. It is not possible simply to inventory all of the instances of a story's use over time, and I will not attempt that here. Where that work has been done, it tends to emphasize the origin story as a standalone unit, a part in the edifice of medieval historical writing. This is problematic for two reasons. Studies of manuscript composition and compilation have indicated that the processes of translation and compilation endowed the translator or compiler with more agency than the accurate copying of one text into another. If history had a purpose, a message, then the author needed to have a sense of how all of his pieces needed to fit together. The second, in connection with the first, is that implies a fixity to stories over time. In moving along specific

points of writing and re-writing, I will instead examine the texts which contain the legendary origins in dialogue with other histories, including those that were written in the generation before. In this way, the questions that can be asked of medieval and early modern authors (including printers) may move from “why did X use this story at this time” to, “what things could this story now mean, both within its text and based on what it used to mean?”

Finally, the extra-disciplinary (even undisciplined) role that history played in all facets of medieval social, intellectual, and cultural life means that all facets of historical culture need to be considered in connection with each other, as far as they can be. Most importantly, questions of use need to be considered with questions of re-use, as histories were not only modified by their authors but also by generations of readers. What careful study of the writing of histories has done for the field of medieval history, study of the re-use of history books provides our best look at the recombinations a single historical text, or a group of them, underwent over decades or even centuries. We are well aware now that books and other written media stood for much more than the texts they contained. Just as they attracted communities of readers at similar times, they also record the presence of continua of readers across time. The cumulative “weight” of histories on the societal imagination thus can be measured not only in ideological, but also material and cultural terms. New histories that invoked the Trojan origins of England came out with the force of ancient authority and as they did so they joined a growing body of “old” books where the same, or similar stories could be read.

In any period, the broad nature of historical writing presents a wealth of information to study, and some things must take precedence over others. The interaction between Continental and English uses of Trojan origins, though it appears to be a constant thread

through all the periods discussed here, will not be discussed in detail.⁵² Although broader attention will be paid to the tradition of historical writing about the Trojan origins of Britain in this dissertation, its later chapters will be organized primarily around the particular uses of the origin story found in the Middle English Prose *Brut* Chronicle. While the larger aim of my project is to fill in the earlier narrative of historical writing and re-writing that emerged in the centuries after Geoffrey's *Historia* first brought the story of Brutus and his progeny into English history, there are several reasons for omitting this material other than concision.

First, the chronicle was the medium that, in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, most frequently connected the history of the ancient Britons to later events, and it is also the least well studied as a work of literature. Especially with regards to the *Brut* tradition, the creation of these chronicles provides a steady reference point for the use of Trojan origins between the medieval and the early modern period. The anonymous Middle English *Brut*, furthermore, enjoys some of the highest survival rates (perhaps the highest, if the printed editions of the chronicle are taken into account) of any medieval text, yet if studied in isolation, it tells us the least about its goals and aims as historical writing. Chronicles, as well, were often the genre of historical writing involved in debates over accuracy and historical method, from twelfth-century arguments over the value of prose, fourteenth- and fifteenth-century interpolations of chronology, to humanist critiques of their language and style as “food without seasoning.”⁵³ Their centrality to conceptions of “history,” whether viewed as a positive or a negative, makes chronicles an excellent reference point from which to assess the changing nature of historical writing.

⁵² For an overview of the use of later chronicle material, see Bellis, *Hundred Years' War*, 51-99. Further work on the subject is forthcoming from Jaclyn Rajsic.

⁵³ Polydore Vergil, *Anglica Historia*, ed and trans D. Sutton, Book I. (<http://www.philological.bham.ac.uk/polverg/contents.html>) See Chapter 6, pp 230-39.

The widespread use of the *Brut* in manuscript and print offers a key perspective on early modern developments in historical writing and thought. Daniel Woolf posits that one such development within early modern historical culture was the crystalization of a more hegemonic “master narrative” of England’s history, along with the acceptability of sources for its validity.⁵⁴ For Woolf, this narrative was one in which authors “frequently argued over the causes and consequences, good or ill, of this or that significant event or personality, but rarely disagreed as to which events or personalities had significance.”⁵⁵ While the increased audience and availability of print made this narrative a more widespread phenomenon by the eighteenth century than it was in the fifteenth, I suggest that the *Brut*’s origin narrative fit this definition for its smaller (though still significant) audience of fifteenth- and sixteenth-century readers. The anonymous chronicles represent a more bespoke and individualized form of this historical culture, even as they suggest that the events and personalities of Britain’s founders still carried significance for generations of writers and readers.

Finally, the wealth of surviving books, too, provides an ideal case to test my approach to reading and re-reading, and carries across critical divides in English history and in English historiography. The *Brut* was read, as the title of this dissertation intimates, both as a “medieval” manuscript and as an “early modern” printed book. In actuality, the distinctions between manuscript and print were less stark, and provide the opportunity to assess continuity as well as change between the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The subject of history writing, which was foundational to education, continuously debated across both periods and, we shall see, was not entirely transformed in either, is thus a necessary and

⁵⁴ Woolf, *Social Circulation*, 397.

⁵⁵ *ibid.*

useful way of dealing with the religious, political, and intellectual changes that took place during the last decades of the fifteenth century and the first decades of the sixteenth.

To a modern reader, the fifteenth-century chronicles that brought the story of England's Trojan ancestry to ever-broader segments of the population must have seemed apt candidates for fancy. Brie has not been the only scholar to see some of the Ancient Mariner in them, nor has he been the only one "held with glittering eye," transfixed by the questions their stories pose. Collectively, these histories and their books are more than just a burden. They represent not the absence of logic or critical reason, but a highly pervasive system of logic and reason built upon two premises. First, human beings (and particularly groups of human beings) needed to have come from somewhere, and second, the origins of a people needed to have significance and, indeed, direct relevance to their fortunes across time to the present. Trojan origins, then, were a particular theory of this unshakable historical "fact." Thus, even these origins were vital, not only in the sense that they were critical to historical understanding, but also in that they were constantly in motion, as the proposition of Britain's Trojan origins was debated, expanded, and contested over centuries and within hundreds if not thousands of history books. If we permit ourselves to be arrested—to stop and consider this story over its own long and influential history—we may find that it has much to tell us about the ways that the English cloaked their fears, hopes, and ambitions in the time-honored language of the past.

Chapter One

Troy's Stories: Aeneas, Antenor, and the Trojan Origins of Britain and Normandy

What place did Troy occupy in the medieval historical imagination? To begin to answer this question is to investigate historical thought at a particularly significant moment in European history. Between the tenth and the twelfth century, a steady demographic and economic transformation took place in Europe, a rising tide which, though uneven in its impact, affected both the longstanding inhabitants of the continent and the recent waves of invaders that had caused chaos over the preceding centuries. Along with a growing and more mobile population came more diverse opportunities for labor and for learning, as access to education and bureaucratic employment moved men from the monastery into the machinery of government. Nowhere was this development more apparent than in the regions around Normandy and Flanders, where a system of large principalities provided a veritable laboratory for administration and territorial sovereignty.

Yet with these new developments came a set of quite old concerns. The population of a duchy like Normandy was a polyglot mix of Celts and Franks, with some Roman influence preserved in the larger urban areas, and newly-arrived Scandinavian invaders.¹ The Normans, whose etymology reveals their origins, were one set of recent arrivals, the duchy's rulers having arrived in the early tenth century and settled amidst a new political system. In order to administer a large territory, they needed not only personal influence but also

¹ See C. Potts, "*Atque Unum ad Diversis Gentibus Populum Effecit*: Historical Tradition and the Norman Identity," *Anglo-Norman Studies* 18 (1995), 139-52.

legitimacy as rulers among their subjects. In short, they needed to reinvent themselves, and in so doing, they promoted the re-invention of history writing.

The twelfth century has been hailed as a “Renaissance” by historians since Charles Homer Haskins first argued that the revival of Latin learning and education truly distinguished the period from the era that had preceded it.² In addition to advances in scholarship, interest in new and renewed forms of emotive literary expression between the tenth and twelfth century mark it as distinct. This era was not just a rebirth of learning, it was also one of the most influential and impactful periods of creative writing in European history. As the range of ways that history could be written expanded, it is perhaps not surprising that the audiences who read or heard it grew as well. It was during this period that Europe, and especially England, discovered its ancient roots in that great tragedy of the classical world, the fall of Troy.

The prevalence of Trojan origins among the peoples of medieval Europe has been remarked upon as a general phenomenon, but most frequently studied in its individual manifestations, where it contributed significantly to nation-focused history, that is, history centered on a group of people (a *gens* or a *natio*) and the territory that they rightfully possess.³ By establishing Rome as the promised land of one group of Trojans, Virgil’s *Aeneid* provided a model of the ideal leader. Pious Aeneas was a warrior and founder of cities, preserver of his family along with the cultural heritage of his people.⁴ The *Aeneid* also provided a model

² C. Haskins, *The Renaissance of the Twelfth Century*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1971).

³ See, for example, R. Waswo, “Our Ancestors, the Trojans: Inventing Cultural Identity in the Middle Ages,” *Exemplaria* 7 (1995): 269-290; Ian Short, “*Tam Angli quam Franci*: Self-Definition in Anglo-Norman England,” *Anglo-Norman Studies* 18 (1991): 153-73; C. Beaune, “The Political Uses of the Trojan Myth,” in *The Birth of an Ideology: Myths and Symbols of Nation in Late-Medieval France*, ed. Frederic Cheyette and trans. S. Huston (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1991), 226-244; Potts, “*Atque Unum*,” 139-40.

⁴ As when Aeneas surveys Carthage and exclaims “o fortunati, quorum iam moenia surgunt!” *Aeneid*, ed. J. Henderson and trans. H.R. Fairclough, *Loeb Classical Library* 63, Revised ed. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999) I:437. See also S. Reynolds, “Medieval *origines gentium* and the Community of the

to the emerging kingdoms of Europe as they established foundations for their cities and territories that predated the arrival of the Romans.

And so the story of one fantastic voyage begins with another. In order for the English to discover their ancient ancestors among the Trojans, it is first necessary to appreciate the different ways that medieval historians thought about the long-lost city, and the sources they used to do so. Historical writing about the fall of Troy was not only available to medieval historians, but also ambiguous and, as a result, ideal for adaptation and historical argument. The primary account of Helen's abduction and Troy's eventual fall, Homer's *Iliad*, had been adapted into historical writing since the very beginnings of that discipline, as Herodotus looked to trace the discord between the Greeks and Persians back through time.⁵ Virgil's epic *Aeneid* was far from being the only ancient authority that told the tale of the Trojans. Competing historical narratives had accrued over the preceding centuries which questioned the authenticity of his account, in large part by offering alternate portrayals of Homer's characters.⁶

The *Aeneid*'s dominance in the classical canon has led us to consider the work's reception in medieval Europe as a cultural and, especially, a literary model.⁷ Aeneas was a minor character in the *Iliad*, mentioned only in connection with the battle. In Virgil's epic,

Realm," *History* 68 (1983): 375-390. Reynolds states that in the Middle Ages that populations tended to assume that their territories were homogeneous (380), but the Normans run contrary to that claim. See below, pp. 40-45.

⁵ "The Persians say that they, for their part, made no account of the women carried off from Asia but that the Greeks, because of a Lacedaemonian woman [vz. Helen], gathered a great army, came straight to Asia, and destroyed the power of Priam, and from that time forth the Persians regarded the Greek people as their foes." Herodotus, *The History*, I.3-6, tr. D. Greene (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), 34.

⁶ M. Reinhold, "The Unhero Aeneas," *Classica and Mediaevalia* 27 (1968): 195-207; S. Merkle, "The Truth and Nothing but the Truth: Dictys and Dares," in *The Novel in the Ancient World*, ed. G. Schmeling (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 563-80.

⁷ See, for example, C. Baswell, *Virgil in Medieval England: Figuring the Aeneid from the Twelfth Century to Chaucer* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995) and L. Mortensen, "The Texts and Contexts of Ancient Roman History in Twelfth-Century Western Scholarship," in *The Perception of the Past in Twelfth-Century Europe*, ed. P. Magdalino (London: Hambledon Press, 1991), 99-116.

however, Aeneas was transformed into the savior of his own family and the Trojan way of life (symbolized by his carrying off of the *penates* from the city), provided with a goddess-given destiny to establish a land for his people, and ultimately endowed with the iconography of the Roman republic. As that Republic transitioned to an empire, Virgil sought to tell the story of the great beginning of a civilization (Rome) from the fall of another (Troy), and to parallel the transition taking place in his own day.

Needless to say, not everyone found Virgil's attempts at mythmaking convincing. The figure of bold, *pious* Aeneas, consoling his crew in the midst of a gale (*forsan olim haec meminisse iuvabit!*) and tearfully recounting the fall of Troy to a love-struck Dido was met with skepticism and even scorn by some of the poet's near contemporaries.⁸ Ovid put the criticism of Aeneas into the suicide note of an incensed and scorned Dido in the *Heroides*, a text which enjoyed a strong medieval reception in histories as well as in vernacular romance.⁹ During the first two centuries CE, histories as well as poetic works tied their critiques of Aeneas to the fluctuating fortunes of Augustan Rome.

The most widely known of these sources, the *De excidio Troiae historia*, claimed to have been written by an eyewitness: Dares the Phrygian, and later translated into Latin by Cornelius Nepos.¹⁰ The work, which was in actuality an invention of late antiquity or the early Middle Ages, cast Aeneas as a participant in a conspiracy to betray Troy to the Greeks. Faced with the immanent destruction of the city and the unflinching (bordering on

⁸ *Aeneid* I 202-207, "Perhaps even this distress it will some day be a joy to recall. Through varied fortunes, through countless hazards, we journey towards Latium, where fate promises us a home of peace. There it is granted that Troy's realm shall rise again, endure, and live for a happier day."

⁹ Ovid, *Heroides* VII. See, for example, P. Damian-Grint, *The New Historians of the Twelfth-Century Renaissance: Inventing Vernacular Authority* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1999), 2-4; *Ovid in the Middle Ages*, ed. J. Clark, F. Coulson, and K. McKinley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

¹⁰ F. Meister ed. and trans. *Daretis Phrygii De Excidio Troiae Historia*, (Leipzig: 1873) hereafter *DET*. An English translation is available as *The Trojan War: the Chronicles of Dictys of Crete and Dares the Phrygian*, tr. R. Frazer (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1966).

tyrannical) decision of Priam not to sue for peace, a group of Trojans led by Antenor allow the Greeks to enter Troy by opening the city's Scaean gate during the night. The account identifies this entryway by the relief of a horse carved above the door, thus painting the famously memorable wooden horse as a piece of poetic exaggeration on the part of Vergil.¹¹ In exchange for their cooperation, Antenor becomes the caretaker of the city, and Aeneas is expelled after it comes to light that Aeneas has sheltered Hecuba's daughter, rather than let her be captured by the pillaging Greeks.

Two key points in the *De excidio*'s account of Aeneas are worthy of further attention, particularly in comparison to Antenor. The first is Aeneas' role in the conspiracy. At all times Dares suggests that the prime mover in the episode is Antenor, who is described as "tall, graceful, swift, crafty, and cautious," rather than the "eloquent, courteous, prudent, pious, and charming" Aeneas.¹² Antenor is the first to sue Priam for peace, and the only one of the three petitioners (along with Aeneas and Polydamus) whose reasoning is recorded. After the counsel, the case for their treason becomes murkier. Priam, enraged both by the suggestion and by its success, plans to kill the three counselors treacherously, fearful that the people of Troy will side with them.¹³ Even though Aeneas is involved in the plot, Dares initially removes him from the main conspirators. Antenor devises the plan and summons Aeneas to hear it.

¹¹ DET 49. "exercitum ad portam Scaeam adducant, ubi extrinsecus caput equi sculptum est."

¹² DET 15. "Aeneam rufum quadratum facundum affabilem fortem cum consilio pium venustum oculis hilaribus et nigris."

¹³ DET 38. Priam argues that the counselors must be killed not only to prevent them from surrendering the city, but also because their arguments have traction with many of the city's inhabitants. "Haec postquam multis verbis dixit hortatusque est eos, [Priamus] consilium dimittit, Amphimacum secum in regiam ducit dicitque ei vereri se ab his qui pacem suaserunt, ne oppidum prodant, eos habere de plebe multos qui una sentient, opus esse eos interfici." (46)

The second is Aeneas' hiding of Polyxena, Hecuba's daughter, from the Greeks at Hecuba's behest. Dares does not use Aeneas' actions as an excuse to moralize: he relates that Aeneas hid Polyxena, that Antenor later begged him to give the princess up, and that, after finding Polyxena himself, Antenor expelled Aeneas and his followers from the city. Thus, if Aeneas isn't the worst traitor in the group, he also isn't the focus of the *De excidio*. Although later in the account, Priam blames Aeneas for helping his son Alexander (Paris) carry off Helen, the *De excidio* does not portray Aeneas as taking an active part in the events leading up to the wars, and while it identifies Antenor and Aeneas as "those who gave away their homeland," (*hi[s] qui una patriam prodiderint*) the *De excidio* hedges their treachery, expressing disbelief that Priam would allow his city and people to be destroyed.¹⁴ At the end of the text, pseudo-Dares identifies himself as "a faithful follower of Antenor," perhaps explaining in part the narrative stance towards the betrayal of Troy to the Greeks. While the *De excidio* offered some further information about the Trojan diaspora that would sweep across Europe, it also raised additional questions about the status of its "traitors:" how justifiable were their actions, and were Antenor and Aeneas equally traitorous to their homeland?

Dares' ambivalent characterization of Aeneas could often be found alongside an equally inventive and possibly earlier counterpoint: the *Ephemeridos Bellae Troiani*, a war-journal attributed to Dictys of Knossus, a participant in the siege on the part of the Greeks. In comparison with the *De Excidio*, the *Ephemeridos* implicates Aeneas directly in Alexander's abduction of Helen, and (as one might expect from a "Greek" source) gives a much more damning account of the Trojans' pillaging on their way back to Greece.¹⁵ While Dictys'

¹⁴ DET 50.

¹⁵ Citations from the *Ephemeridos Belli Troiani* (Hereafter EBT) are taken from the Library of Latin Texts (Brill) Online, <http://clt.brepolis.net/llta/pages/Toc.aspx?ctx=945215>. Last Accessed 3/20/2017. EBT bk. 1:3, 1:5.

account of the siege is less favorable to the Trojans (Paris is accused of treacherously murdering Achilles in the temple of Apollo, after which the gods forsake Troy), he is far from exculpatory of the Greeks, suggesting that their greed and faction ultimately leads to murder after the city is pillaged. Instead, Dictys maintains that divine retribution for the actions of Priam's family leads to the fall of the city, as well as the literal collapse of Priam's house.¹⁶

Throughout the account, the Trojans are constantly described as deceitful, treacherous, and barbarous. However, when the time comes to surrender the city, a truce is negotiated at the behest of the people. Both Aeneas and Antenor heap scorn upon Priam for his poor decisions, and, overcome with guilt, Priam ultimately puts Antenor in charge of negotiating the surrender of the city.¹⁷ From this point onward, Antenor serves as a double agent for the Greeks, pretending to negotiate on the Trojans' behalf but subverting their cause at every opportunity, even stealing the sacred relic of Troy, the palladium, and handing it over to the Greeks.¹⁸ Thus, even as Dictys maintained that Antenor betrayed the city to the Greeks with Aeneas' help, he depicts Aeneas as more hostile to authority and as more treacherous than Dares had. Aeneas has an even smaller part to play in the aftermath of Troy's fall in the *Ephemeridos*. No mention is made of his role in the negotiations, or of his hiding Polyxena. He is spared, Dictys relates, because it had been foretold by an oracle, but soon driven out of the city after he attempted to take it from Antenor.¹⁹ In stark contrast to Priam's mismanagement, Antenor remains in the city and rules it well.

¹⁶ *EBT* bk. 4:11-13; 5:5.

¹⁷ *EBT* bk. 5:2-3.

¹⁸ *EBT* bk. 5:8.

¹⁹ *EBT* bk. 6:17.

As Meyer Reinhold argues, these markedly less heroic portrayals of Aeneas arose from earlier disputes about the classical heritage within the Christianizing Mediterranean world.²⁰ Though they appear to us as notorious frauds, these late antique literary inventions reinvented the pious Aeneas of Vergil's work, critiquing Virgil's vision of imperial Rome through Virgil's ideal Roman. While the *De Excidio* and the *Ephemeridos* call attention to the problematic nature of the Aeneas's escape from Troy, both elevate Antenor to the main antagonist. If "the portrait of a self-seeking, ambitious Aeneas" was the one that medieval historians encountered most frequently, it accompanied an equally, if not more unflattering portrayal of his companion, Antenor.²¹

As part of the process of adaptation and transformation, the genealogical descent of the Trojans through Dardanus and Jupiter was written into the universal (Biblical) genealogy of mankind's descent through Adam and Noah.²² From the early seventh century, Isidore of Seville's incorporation of Dares into his *Etymologies* immortalized the *De Excidio* as authoritative, and its pseudo-author as the first pagan historiographer.²³ For later authors, these alternate portrayals were not only available, but carried scholarly weight. The history of Troy, along with the ambiguous figures of Aeneas and Antenor, had become part of the fabric of the Christian history of late antiquity. The stories of Troy, along with the authoritative weight of ancient accounts would all be seized upon by later historians looking to appropriate the narrative for new nations. Thus, even texts like the *Aeneid* did not come down to the Middle Ages as straightforward models of imperial power or individual virtue.

²⁰ Reinhold, "Unhero Aeneas," 200-204.

²¹ Reinhold, "Unhero Aeneas," 195.

²² Reynolds, "*Origines Gentium*," 377; Waswo, "Our Ancestors," 269-72.

²³ *Etymologiarum sive originum libri XX*, ed. and trans. W. M. Lindsay (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1911), 1.42.1. For Dares' reception in fourteenth-century England, see F. Clark, "Reading the 'First Pagan Historiographer,' Dares Phrygius and Medieval Genealogy," *Viator* 41.2 (2010): 203-26.

They should not be read as such. Rather, the historians of the twelfth century exploited classical stories as they employed them to express, as well as critique, power and virtue.

Upon what other grounds could these twelfth-century writers base their works? Latin history writing preserved an authenticity and authority through the tenor of its language and its reliance upon ancient sources, where they could be found. We will see, however, that the lack of early written histories of the Normans and Britons, combined with the relative silence of Roman historians on the subject, provided opportunities for even the most traditional historians to recover a lost past and eloquently express it. Two things must be remembered about this process. First, the writing of history was an inventive and creative process. Even histories that drew heavily upon existing authorities relied upon their author's rhetorical style (usually despite his arguments to the contrary) to ensure that its message was conveyed.²⁴ Second, the assertion of one people's history, which I will refer to as national due to its focus on a *gens* or a *natio*, never took place within a social vacuum, again despite a historian's best attempts to make it so. When historians explored and promoted the past of a chosen people, more often than not, they did so in order to resolve contestation and conflict in the present, and claimed territories which were not ethnically homogeneous by suppressing the mention of non-dominant populations. These histories, therefore, make the most sense when read in connection as well as in competition with each other.

If the historians of the eleventh and twelfth centuries inherited a number of competing portrayals of Aeneas and the Trojans, they also expanded the ways in which history could be expressed. The emergence of vernacular histories at this time both enlarged

²⁴ Damian-Grint, *New Historians*, 94-117; R. Blumenfeld-Kosinski, Renate, "Introduction: The Middle Ages," in *The Politics of Translation in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*, ed. R. Blumenfeld-Kosinski, L. von Flotow, and D. Russel (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 2001), 17-27, 20-25.

the historian's audience and posed new challenges for his claims to authenticity.²⁵ These works were more visibly dependent upon their (Latin) sources, as well as their authors and translators, for their authority. As Peter Damian-Grint has shown, the techniques and traditions of vernacular history writing developed alongside, but demonstrate independence from, the Latin tradition.²⁶ The aims of histories were still educational as well as entertaining, but a new courtly audience brought with it slightly different expectations for both. As a result of this, and also of a growing market for literary patronage, the figure of the author became more prominent and important within the text.

The remainder of this chapter will examine how two different textual traditions within the territory of the nascent Anglo-Norman *regnum*, the Continental and the Insular, made use of Trojan origins in their histories, and how these histories were, in turn, extended and adapted into the vernacular. While I will initially discuss these traditions separately, I do not wish to suggest, as other studies have, that distinct boundaries existed between the Latin and vernacular traditions, and, more importantly between the histories of the ancient Normans and the early Britons. It should become apparent that the sources of both traditions, and even the authors themselves, participated in both.²⁷ As a result, I will argue, Trojan origins became a powerful way of claiming access to an ancient and venerable past, but also of differentiating and disputing claims of superiority, legitimacy, and territory among the writers and rulers of England and Continental Europe.

²⁵ See N. Partner, *Serious Entertainments: The Writing of History in Twelfth-Century England* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977); J. Blacker, *The Faces of Time: Portrayal of the Past in Old French and Latin Historical Narrative of the Anglo-Norman Regnum* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1994); G. Spiegel, *Romancing the Past: The Rise of Vernacular Prose Historiography in Thirteenth-Century France* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1993), esp. 55-98.

²⁶ Damian-Grint, *New Historians*, 28-38 and 199-207.

²⁷ Joanna Bellis, among others, suggests the "terminology not of *influence* but *confluence*" when discussing linguistic exchange. J. Bellis, *The Hundred Years' War in Literature, 1337-1600* (Cambridge: DS Brewer, 2016), 27-45, at 39. See also I. Short, "Tam Angli quam Franci: Self-Definition in Anglo-Norman England," *Anglo-Norman Studies* 18 (1991): 153-173.

I. The Normans and their Histories: Dudo of Saint-Quentin

The incursions of Scandinavian raiders and settlers into Continental Europe and England had been a disrupting force in historiography prior to the twelfth century, but a century and a half after the Norman dukes had carved out a territory for themselves in northern France, they provided the impetus for a new kind of history writing. In the eyes of those studying the period, the Anglo-Norman *regnum* was the proving ground for new articulations of sovereignty, identity, and “national” politics. Nowhere was this quite as apparent as in the histories that originated in the period. The Norman *gens*, an outsider to the political and social structures of Continental Europe, emerged as the inheritor of ancient traditions and the spur to new ones.

Yet the conditions of rule in the Duchy of Normandy introduced some notable challenges into the histories of the Normans. The Norman dukes were notably different in language, manner, and custom not only from the people they came to rule over, but also from their pagan ancestors. These tensions are manifest in the first origin history of the Normans: the *De moribus et actis primum Normannorum ducum*. The work, which narrated the deeds of the first four Viking chiefs in Normandy, was written at the turn of the eleventh century by Dudo of St. Quentin at the request of Richard I, third duke of Normandy, Gunnor, his wife, and Richard II, his son and successor. Dudo’s work provided the foundation for the conversion of the Normans from pagan raiders to legitimate Christian kings, and in doing so translated the Trojan legacy from the Mediterranean to the North.

As Eleanor Searle has shown, the Latin tradition of the *Aeneid* was not the only, or even the primary, tradition driving the composition of Dudo's history.²⁸ His composition is singular not only for its eloquent style, but also for its attempt to merge the literary traditions of two separate peoples and religions. In his explanation of the origins of the Danes (Dacians), Dudo describes them as a wanton and warlike people, and links them to Antenor and the Trojans. "Thus the Dacians are called by their people Greeks or Danes, and they boast that they are descended from Antenor."²⁹ Their initial ambassador to Europe is not a valiant conqueror, but rather a dishonest and bloodthirsty pagan, Hasting, who pillages Normandy and puts himself in the service of the Franks.³⁰ Dudo might be implying that the Danes are improperly claiming an origin that is above them. However, if this association also brought to mind the Antenor portrayed by Dares, the *De moribus* could be read to suggest that the character of the Danes is a match for this particular branch of the Trojan diaspora.

Dudo's use of the Trojan inheritance puts the Danes on shaky ground, and the rest of the *De moribus* transforms as much as translates the *Aeneid*. The hero of Dudo's history is not Hasting but Rollo, the first Duke of Normandy, who is exiled from his land when his father is falsely dispossessed, and embarks on a journey of epic proportions. Unlike Vergil's hero, however, Rollo is "a particular kind of Aeneas, an Aeneas of the Vikings. He is no founder, but a rebuilder. He puts together what others have destroyed."³¹ During his travels, Rollo first lands in England, where his prowess in battle earns him the friendship and assistance of Athelstan of England, and he ultimately defeats Hasting to claim Normandy as his own. The driving force behind the voyage is a prophetic dream in which, as one of

²⁸ E. Searle, "Fact and Pattern in Heroic History: Dudo of St. Quentin," *Viator* 15 (1984): 119-37, 120; B. Pohl, *Dudo of Saint-Quentin's Historia Normannorum: Tradition, Innovation, and Memory* (Woodbridge: York Medieval Press, 2015).

²⁹ E. Christiansen trans, *Dudo of Saint-Quentin: History of the Normans* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1998), 15.

³⁰ *History of the Normans*, 16-17.

³¹ Searle, "Fact and Pattern," 125.

Rollo's Christian followers interprets, Rollo is promised a land of his own where he will embrace Christianity and unite many peoples into one.³² Thus, Dudo built upon the valorous, but ambiguous inheritance of the Trojans to unite classical, pagan heroism with Christianity and to establish the Normans in their own territory.

Throughout the *De moribus*, Christian virtue is allied, at times uneasily, with the military prowess and tactics of the conquering Danes. While the Daci are described by Dudo as a valorous and unconquered people, the battle tactics that he describes often employ ruses or outright treachery. Hasting's raids in Francia exemplify the latter. In an episode that draws more heavily upon Norse saga than classical epic, the pagan leader fakes his own conversion to Christianity, as well as his own death, to enter into the southern town of Luna and slaughter its inhabitants, beginning with the bishop as he conducted Hasting's funeral mass.³³ In their initial skirmishes with the Franks, Rollo's forces hide in ditches and bunch together to appear smaller and induce the Franks to attack.³⁴ When cornered, the Danes are not above ambushing their enemies as they sleep.³⁵ Although Rollo's stratagems are made out to be as much the fault of Frankish brashness as the product of Dacian cunning, the strategies of the Normans add an element of ruthlessness to Dudo's history which would be echoed by successive historians, in England as well as in Normandy.³⁶

The tension between valor and order intensifies as the newly-made Dukes of Normandy defend their territory from the Franks who would take it back from them. The

³² *History of the Normans*, 29.

³³ *History of the Normans*, 19-20 and n. 88. While most generally this ruse represents a "Trojan Horse" type of deception, the same deeds are ascribed to Ragnar Lothbrok in Norse saga, and appear in other Norman histories. Searle, "Fact and Pattern," 120.

³⁴ *History of the Normans*, 36-37. The Frankish commander, Ragnold, twice decides to quickly attack the Normans over the objections of Hasting, and both Hasting and Ragnold abandon their men in order to save themselves.

³⁵ *History of the Normans*, 44-45.

³⁶ See below, pg. 50.

more Latinized the Normans become, the more they risk losing their reputation for valor in battle, by virtue of which they hold their land.³⁷ As Rollo sails down the Seine, his followers describe the territory they will conquer. “This land is plentifully furnished with an abundant supply of all the fruits of the earth, shady with trees, divided up by rivers filled with fish, copiously supplied with diverse kinds of wild game, but empty of armed men and warriors.”³⁸ In the way that matters most to the Normans—its ability to put up resistance—this area is *terra nulla*.

The plurality of peoples under the control of the Norman dukes creates a new narrative arc for histories of this type. Rollo becomes an even more apparent foil for Hasting, who unites the tribes of pagan Danes, by creating a nation bound not by kinship but by allegiance.³⁹ But if the *De moribus* has the line of Rollo and all who serve them accepting Christianity, the older thematic elements of feud, disagreement, and disturbance still had a prominent place within the narrative, just as they did within the duchy during the first centuries of Norman rule. Emily Albu interprets the ambiguous nature of the Trojan inheritance, allied by Dudo with pagan military might, as part of a larger theme of treachery inherent in the Normans themselves.⁴⁰

³⁷ Searle presents this adaptation as a conscious decision on the part of the Normans (“Fact and Pattern,” 129). As William Longsword’s reign in the *De Moribus* shows, this was not without its consequences. L. Shopkow, *History and Community: Norman Historical Writing in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1997), 73-4.

³⁸ *History of the Normans*, 36. Contrast this lack of warriors with the later complaint of Franco, Bishop of Rouen, about the devastation of his kingdom’s agriculture, “The kingdoms which I am obliged to rule is (*sic*) desolate. *The earth is not being broken by the plow*. The commonwealth is held captive and being done to death. I cannot resist Rollo because every day I am being deprived of my men.” (41, emphasis mine).

³⁹ *History of the Normans*, 17; Searle, “Fact and Pattern,” 137; Shopkow, *History and Community*, 8-12.

⁴⁰ E. Albu, *The Normans in Their Histories: Propaganda, Myth, and Subversion* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2001), 4. “According to their own historians, the Norman people were unruly, their communities volatile. Indeed, the very traits that had ensured their conquests worked against the creation of stable and satisfying societies, exacting an emotional toll from people who could neither trust nor be trusted.”

However, the free and indomitable of the Normans needed to contend with some new political realities. Rollo, though never defeated in battle, had to hold his newly-won land as a vassal of the king of France. These tensions come to a head when Charles the Simple awards Rollo his land. Dudo relates that Rollo places his hands between the kings' hands, a sign of fealty and a gesture "which neither his father, his grandfather, nor his great-grandfather had done for any man," but stops short of bowing to kiss the king's foot. He orders one of his warriors to do so in his place, but rather than bow this unnamed Norman grabs Charles' foot and raises it to his mouth, upending the monarch and causing "a great laugh, and a great outcry among the people."⁴¹ Dudo thus downplayed the tension between Frankish custom and Norman might by turning the ceremonial oath of fealty on its head (along with the monarch). Yet Rollo's right to this new promised land was contingent upon his people forsaking, to a degree, their old ways to participate in the new society they had thrust themselves into, and won "with weapons and the sweat of battle."⁴² It fell to successive Norman historians to address the problems of religion and succession that the Trojan Danes brought to Normandy.

William of Jumièges, who began writing some fifty years after Dudo, expanded the message of the *De moribus* to address two important developments in Norman society in his *Gesta Normanorum ducum*. The first was its changing system of inheritance. Initially the custom among the Normans, as it was among the Scandinavian peoples, was to have each leader appoint his successor: usually a son, but not necessarily a legitimate one.⁴³ Over the eleventh century, the system of inheritance within the Duchy moved towards that which we commonly associate with feudal society—legitimate primogeniture—which also required

⁴¹ *History of the Normans*, 49.

⁴² *History of the Normans*, 37.

⁴³ Shopkow, *History and Community*, 81-5.

Christian marriage. Dudo had avoided complications of succession by depicting Rollo and William I (Longsword), the first two rulers of the duchy, as only having one son apiece, but William of Jumièges took pains to stress that the rulers all the way down Rollo's line had been legitimate. If Dudo suggested that both Christianity and military might were central to Rollo's inheritance, the generations after Richard I had only strengthened Norman ties to the Church.

The second development was territorial, and made legitimate, Christian kingship all the more vital. Rollo's line now controlled not only Normandy, but also England as well, the result of William II (the Conqueror)'s victory at Hastings in 1066. In the *GND*, the military virtue of the Normans thus became a more Christian valor. This Norman virtue came into sharper contrast to the treacherous Trojan Danes. William preserved the Trojan origin of the Danes through Antenor that Dudo had provided, but added that Antenor had been responsible for betraying the city to the Greeks, bringing the *GND*'s Trojan origins more explicitly into line with the tradition of Dares and Dictys.⁴⁴ He also provided another origin for the Danes, from the Goths, which bypassed Troy entirely.⁴⁵ William also removed Rollo's parentage and prophetic dreams from the *Gesta*, judging them to be "merely flattering," compared to the actual morality of the later Norman Dukes.⁴⁶

The conquest of England brought many changes to the new Anglo-Norman *regnum*, as new territories and traditions came under the administration of William and his sons. The expansion and increased diversity of the "Normans" and their subjects has been the subject of much scholarly interest. In addition to peoples, it also brought diverse historiographies

⁴⁴ E. Van Houts, ed. and trans. *The Gesta Normannorum Ducum of William of Jumièges, Orderic Vitalis, and Robert of Torigni*, vol 1 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), 15.

⁴⁵ *GND* xxxv-xxxvii and 15-17; Albu, *Normans in their Histories*, 62-3; Bouet, "Origine Troyenne," 407-8.

⁴⁶ *GND* 7. Robert of Torigni, who compiled a later redaction of the *Gesta*, added the passages back in from Dudo. *GND* 35-51.

into contact and conflict. In the next section, I will argue that the origin narrative of the Normans, along with its connections to Troy, became the subject of a particularly inventive historian: Geoffrey of Monmouth.

II. The Trojan Britons: Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia regum Britanniae*

If Dudo of Saint-Quentin had tepidly endorsed the connection of the peoples of Northern Europe to Troy, then Geoffrey of Monmouth wholeheartedly embraced the authoritative and argumentative power of the legend. His *Historia regum Britanniae* (c.1138), which provided the most detailed description to date of the island's pre-Roman history, made Britain into a promised land for the exiled Trojans under Brutus, a great-grandson of Aeneas, and set the previously unheard of Britons on the path to greatness equal to or surpassing Aeneas and his other descendants. Along with Brutus, who gave the people and the island its name, we find for the first time the stories of King Lear and his daughters, of Brenne and Belin, two brothers who put aside family strife in order to conquer the known world, and, most importantly, of King Arthur and his prophesied return to lead the Britons back to greatness.

The novelty of Geoffrey's *Historia* caused a stir among historians of the twelfth century, and the inventiveness of the *Historia* would win the author abundant critics and supporters in the centuries that followed. Among modern historians, Geoffrey's history of the ancient Britons was originally thought to be useful for little else than as a litmus test of a medieval historian's critical ability.⁴⁷ Those who accepted Geoffrey's fabulous narrative and

⁴⁷ C. L. Kingsford, *English Historical Literature in the Fifteenth Century* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1913); A. Gransden, *Historical Writing in England, vol. 2: c.1307 to the Early Sixteenth Century* (London: Routledge, 1982).

strained etymological arguments were, at the least, chided for their gullibility, while Geoffrey's critics were praised for their ability to see past an edifice of medieval fiction and invention. However, with a greater appreciation of Geoffrey's narrative, as well as the individual manuscripts of the *Historia* and their influence, historians are increasingly coming to view this time period, and Geoffrey's text, as critical in the formulation of medieval historical thought, even if it marked the outer limits of what could reasonably pass for history.⁴⁸

One of the earliest historians to approach Geoffrey on terms closer to his own was Robert Hanning, who examined Geoffrey's relationship to Bede, Gildas, and Nennius, and credited the *Historia* with setting a new, secular course for insular history writing.⁴⁹ Where the earlier British historians had fit their descriptions of actors and peoples into a paradigm determined by virtue and salvation, Geoffrey's *Historia* took advantage of the new currents of classicism running through Anglo-Norman historiography to present a cyclical historical narrative driven by fortune and the success or failings of the early British kings.⁵⁰ In the final analysis, however, Geoffrey's reinvention of early British history was so radical that few other writers could or would undertake a similar project: "The *Historia regum Britanniae* remained in splendid isolation while the disciplines of history took the path to Wace's popular courtly narrative, or towards the more austere and imposing documents of the St. Albans school, and the literary romance opted for the path into the forest."⁵¹

Laura Keeler's *Geoffrey of Monmouth and the Late Latin Chroniclers, 1300-1500* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1946) is explicitly organized around this principle.

⁴⁸ R. Southern, "Aspects of the European Tradition of Historical Writing," in *History and Historians: Collected Papers of R.W. Southern*, ed. R. Bartlett (Oxford: Blackwell, 2004), 11-83, 28.

⁴⁹ R. Hanning, *The Vision of History in Early Britain: From Gildas to Geoffrey of Monmouth*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1966), esp. 136-38.

⁵⁰ Hanning, *Vision of History*, 142-43.

⁵¹ Hanning, *Vision of History*, 176. Though space prohibits a fuller discussion here, I contend that one of the more interesting elements of historical writing in the ensuing two centuries is how it continues to intersect

Hanning's work broke ground for studies of individual elements and themes within the *Historia*, as well as Geoffrey's debt to, and influence upon, other twelfth-century historians.⁵² We also have a greater understanding of the uses to which the *Historia* was put within the first century of its existence. In large part, however, the isolation that separated the *Historia* from other historical works or traditions remains. This, I believe, is partly due to the language, style, and subject matter of the *Historia*. Geoffrey's Britons have no direct connection to the Anglo-Normans, even though the task of reconciling the passage of dominion was undertaken with difficulty in the decades following the *Historia*'s composition.⁵³

In the discussion of Geoffrey that follows, however, I will suggest that the *Historia regum Britanniae* did not emerge from a solely insular setting, or from the fruitful imagination of Geoffrey of Monmouth alone. Rather, Geoffrey's narrative choices, particularly in the origin sections of the *Historia* acquired meaning by comparison with, and in opposition to the Trojan narrative established by earlier Norman historiographers. The origins of the Britons that Geoffrey set down in the *Historia*, do not fit Hanning's characterization of "parod[y] with considerable consciousness and purpose, working not with historical material

with the romance tradition, both in its manuscript context and in story elements from both. See S. Crane, *Insular Romance: Politics, Faith, and Culture in Anglo-Norman and Middle English Literature*. (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1986) G. Burgess, *Two Medieval Outlaws: Eustace the Monk and Fouke Fitz Waryn* (Cambridge, DS Brewer 1997); F. Le Saux, "The Reception of the Matter of Britain in Thirteenth-Century England: A Study of some Anglo-Norman Manuscripts of Wace's *Roman de Brut*," in *Thirteenth-Century England X: Proceedings of the Durham Conference 2003*, ed. M. Prestwich, R. Britnell, and R. Frame (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2005), 131-145 and below, Chapter 3, p. 77.

⁵² Particularly the other Anglo-Norman historians whom, in Hanning's assessment, Geoffrey "parodied with considerable consciousness and purpose" (*Vision of History*, 124). See, for example, J. Gillingham, "The Context and Purposes of Geoffrey of Monmouth's *History of the Kings of Britain*," *Anglo-Norman Studies* 13 (1990), 99-118; D. Rollo and L. Ashe, *Historical Fabrication, Ethnic Fable and French Romance in Twelfth-Century England* (Lexington, KY: 1998); J. Zatta, "Translating the *Historia*: The Ideological Transformation of the *Historia Regum Britanniae* in Twelfth-Century Vernacular Chronicles," *Arthuriana* 8:4 (1998) 148-161.

⁵³ R. Leckie, *The Passage of Dominion: Geoffrey of Monmouth and the Periodization of Insular History in the Twelfth Century* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1981), esp. chs. 3 and 4. See also O. de Laborderie, "A New Pattern for English History: the First Genealogical Rolls of the Kings of England," in *Broken Lines: Genealogical Literature in Late-Medieval Britain and France*, ed. R. Radulescu and E. D. Kennedy (Turnhout: Brepols 2008), 45-62. Further work on this topic is forthcoming from Jaclyn Rajsic.

but with legends and with his own fertile imagination.”⁵⁴ The consciousness and purpose with Geoffrey composed the *Historia* were indeed considerable, but Geoffrey contended that the stories he used were precisely historical material.

The origins that Geoffrey proposed for the Britons can be summarized as follows, and later chapters will draw out individual elements in greater detail.⁵⁵ Brutus, Aeneas’ great-grandson, is born under the prophecy that he would kill both his parents and be exiled from his land, but would ultimately achieve great honor. The first part of the prophecy is fulfilled when his mother dies in childbirth and Brutus later kills his father in a hunting accident. Brutus is exiled to Greece, where he discovers a community of enslaved Trojans and lives among them. He is eventually elected as their leader, and after unsuccessfully suing the king of Greece, Pandrasus, for the freedom that their ancestry demanded, Brutus defeats Pandrasus’ forces by stratagem, ambushing them during the night and capturing the king in the process.

As the Trojans debate the king’s ransom, a lieutenant of Brutus named Mempricius addresses the assembly urging them to depart rather than live in proximity to the Greeks, for the Trojans

“will never enjoy uninterrupted peace as long as the brothers, sons and grandsons of those you slaughtered yesterday dwell among you or near you. They will never forget their fathers’ deaths and will hate you forever.”⁵⁶

The Trojans heed his advice, and Brutus exchanges Pandrasus for ships and supplies, as well as the hand of his daughter, Innogen, in marriage. After a short time at sea, the fleet lands on

⁵⁴ Hanning, *Vision of History*, 124.

⁵⁵ See M. Reeve, ed and N. Wright trans. *The History of the Kings of Britain*, (Woodbridge: 2007) Hereafter HRB. Unless otherwise specified, all translations from the Latin are Dr. Wright’s.

⁵⁶ HRB I:231-34. *Nunquam diuturna pace fruimini dum fratres et filii et nepotes eorum quibus besternam intulistis stragem vobis vel inmixti vel vicini fuerint. Semper enim necis parentum suorum memores, aeterno vos habebunt odio.*

an uninhabited island where Brutus receives a prophecy from the goddess Diana. Diana informs Brutus of an uninhabited island beyond Gaul that will become a New Troy, and that his descendants will become “masters of the whole world.”⁵⁷

Departing the island, Brutus sails around the Pillars of Hercules and encounters another group of Trojans led by Corineus, descended from Antenor, who accompany them to France. After fighting the Franks to a draw and establishing the city of Tours, Brutus and Corineus depart in the face of mounting resistance and sail to Albion, landing at Totnes in Devon. Albion is not entirely uninhabited, (there are still giants on the island) but the Britons quickly drive them into the mountains and begin to till the soil. Brutus names the territory Britain, and gives Corineus the territory of Cornwall, which the valorous lieutenant desired above all others because of his penchant for wrestling giants. One of these giants, Gogmagog, leads a surprise attack on the Britons while they are feasting in honor of Diana. The attack is repulsed, and after all the other giants are destroyed, Corineus defeats Gogmagog in a wrestling match, hurling the giant into the sea. Brutus then founds New Troy, which eventually becomes London, on the River Thames, and establishes laws for his followers, now the Britons.

Thus, the Trojans are off to an auspicious start in Geoffrey’s *Historia*, and elements of Brutus’ founding story drive the remainder of Geoffrey’s narrative. The themes of freedom, prowess, and prophecy, also found at the origin of Norman history, differ not in their inclusion but in their emphases. Of these, the most important is the claim to freedom that Trojan descent promises. Trojan freedom and valor guarantee that Brutus and his followers are able to reach Britain, and fulfill Diana’s prophecy in the first place, and the

⁵⁷ HRB I:309-12. *hanc pete; namque tibi sedes erit illa perhennis. Hic fiet natis altera Troia tuis. Hic de prole tua reges nascentur, et ipsis totius terrae subditus orbis erit.* This section of the *Historia* would later be copied into vernacular texts as the “Oratio Dianae ad Brutum,” See below, Chapter 4, pp. 180-82.

common origin unites the two bands of Trojans under Brutus and Corineus. This union becomes stronger when Brutus' oldest son marries Corineus' daughter, but ultimately proves fragile.

Although Brutus is clearly presented as the founder and unifier of his people, their acclaimed leader on account of his virtue, Geoffrey's hero is not uniformly heroic or virtuous. Like Dares' Aeneas, but also like the Norman Dukes in the *De moribus*, Brutus is placed in situations where he acts deceptively. The campaign against Pandrasus, thus, consists of a battle where the Trojans ambush and defeat a Greek army advancing on the city of Sparatinum. Geoffrey points out that the Greek army is "unarmed and disordered," and thus what was a stratagem becomes a one-sided slaughter.⁵⁸ Later, when Pandrasus besieges the city, Brutus plots to assault the Greek camp during the night and "slaughter the Greeks in their sleep," a feat he accomplishes with the aid of a Greek prisoner who agrees to betray his people in order to save his own life.⁵⁹

It is worth pointing out that, even within these episodes, the position of Brutus is hedged by Geoffrey. The nocturnal ambush of the Greek camp, especially, is both the product of the Greeks' own reluctance to attack the Trojans (perhaps a deliberate inversion of the outcome at Troy) and also of Brutus' need to rescue his besieged people with inferior numbers. As he releases the Trojans, Pandrasus praises their leader as, "a young man of such prowess, whose descent from the race of Priam and Anchises is proclaimed both by his inherent nobility and by the reputation we know so well."⁶⁰ This reputation, of course, is also one of slaughter and guile. Pandrasus' *volte face* can be explained in part by the ambiguous

⁵⁸ HRB I: 111-12.

⁵⁹ HRB I: 150-67.

⁶⁰ HRB I: 253-55. *adolescenti tanti probitatis... quem ex generi Priami et Anchisae creatum et nobilitas quae in ipso pullulat et fama nobis cognita declarat.*

figure of Aeneas and his descendants that Geoffrey had inherited from Dares and, more to the point, from his more contemporary Anglo-Norman predecessors.

There is also a sense that all branches of the family are not created entirely equal in Geoffrey's *Historia*. Corineus is given his own territory, which he names after himself and which enjoys a disproportionate influence on British affairs, but he still holds that territory through Brutus, his leader and overlord. Indeed, his decision to name his own territory Cornwall is explicitly referred to as following Brutus' example.⁶¹ While attention has been drawn to the shifting terminology of Britain and England in later translations of Geoffrey, or even to Corineus' "monstrous" or "gigantic" alterity with a view towards establishing multiple foundations of different parts of Britain, the key message of the initial text appears to be one of unification under a single leader. Britain, that is, the island possessed by Brutus, encompasses Cornwall, just as it encompasses Wales and Scotland, and as Geoffrey goes to great lengths to demonstrate in the remainder of his *Historia*, that integrity is only sustainable when the British subjects unite under their legitimate monarch, and when that monarch, in turn, conducts himself in a manner that benefits the entire community.

Certain elements in this narrative, as well, seem to be constructed in opposition to the Trojan origins of the Normans. In tracing Brutus' descent from Aeneas, Geoffrey not only entwines the early narrative of Britain into the earliest histories of the Romans, but also draws a distinction between the leadership of Brutus and the service of Corineus, the descendant of Antenor. Even though Corineus and the people of Cornwall exercise significant, even disproportional influence over the fate of the British realm, they begin from

⁶¹ HRB I:462-65. *At Corineus portionem regni quae sorti suae cesserat ab appellatione etiam sui nominis Corineam vocat, populum quoque suum Coriniensem, exemplum ducis insecutus.* The Prose Brut makes this position explicit in its third chapter, "How Coryn become Brute's man, and how king Goffar in France was discomfyted." Brie, *The Brut*, 8.

an initial position of subservience to Aeneas. The battles against the Franks, too, suggest an inversion of Rollo's journey to his own promised land, a journey which emphasized the might of the Danes over the order and friendship of the English.

The most significant difference, however, arises precisely from Geoffrey's decision to focus on the origins of the Britons in antiquity. Unlike the unconquered Rollo and his Normans, the land prophetically promised to the Britons is devoid of legitimate inhabitants. Whereas the Normans encountered a rich land deficient of fighting men, the territories settled by the Britons are devoid of any men or women. In other words, there is no need for the Trojans to swear fealty to anyone in order to obtain control of their territory. While Dudo needed to assert the Normans' prowess at the same time as they swore fealty to the king of France as their overlord, Geoffrey's Britons gain control of their land from the ground up, first by bringing it under cultivation, then by removing its gigantic inhabitants and constructing its first city. Diana's prophecy is a key component in determining where the Britons go, but their Trojan virtue and the freedom that their ancestry commands are what sets their journey in motion.

Geoffrey of Monmouth's origin story thus simultaneously enforces three separate claims to the territory of Britain, that of blood and prophecy, that of conquest, and that of civilization and improvement.⁶² As subsequent historians encountered Geoffrey's *Historia*, these claims were duly parsed, emphasized or diminished, but there is good reason to believe that his choices in constructing the origin narrative of ancient Britain were motivated by the trends in Anglo-Norman historical writing begun by Dudo. At later points in the text,

⁶² See F. Ingledew, "The Book of Troy and the Genealogical Construction of History: The Case of Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae*," *Speculum* 69 (1994): 665-704, at 681-88.

Geoffrey is careful to link as many events to Roman history as possible, in order to create a coherent work.

Concurrent with the drive for freedom is the fear of living among foreigners or enemies. Mempricius' speech is one of the longest rhetorical set-pieces in the first book of Geoffrey's *Historia*, and indeed, the motivating force for future arguments against tribute and conquest. The more territory the Britons acquire, the greater the risk that their enemies will return at a later time and exact vengeance. Thus, although the *Historia* has been read and appropriated at different points in its history as providing a model of British "empire," the inheritance of empire often proves more trouble than it is worth for the British kings.

Indeed, the problem of "empire" has been key for scholars looking to understand Geoffrey's *Historia*. What message about the role of *Britannia* was his audience—or, more correctly, his audiences—supposed to draw from his work? If the Britons had conquered the known world and expanded beyond their borders, they had done so to their undoing as well as their fame. For a long time, historians looking to explain the audience for Geoffrey's *Historia* pointed to the extensive conquests of the Britons as the reason for the text's popularity. The connection to such a famous people and an expansive empire, in the consideration of scholars such as Richard Waswo, was useful to the Norman and Angevin monarchs such as Henry II of England, who could cast themselves in the figure of Arthur.⁶³ Others, such as John Gillingham, have suggested a more limited, insular audience. Gillingham associates the Britons more closely with the Welsh, and posits that the *Historia* came into its own during a period of relative ascendancy of the Welsh princes, with the attendant fears on the part of the rest of the inhabitants that the princes would expand and

⁶³ Waswo, "Our Ancestors, the Trojans," 285.

control their ancient patrimony.⁶⁴ In what follows, I suggest that although the territory of Britain itself is most critical to the *Historia*, its narrative was appropriated by a much wider range of individuals than the Angevin monarchs or the Welsh princes. Furthermore, I argue that the pattern of legitimacy, stability, and empire invoked by the *Historia* could be defensive as well as expansive. In other words, the Trojan origin narrative of Britain can be seen to reassert itself when the territory controlled by the English kings was shrinking, rather than growing.

III. Order and Anarchy: Geoffrey of Monmouth and Wace

The immediate impact of the *Historia* on Anglo-Norman writing appears to have been underestimated. The reasons for this are two-fold. First, the research that focuses on the *Historia*'s development emphasizes histories such as its anonymous *First Variant Version*, Wace's *Roman de Brut* and Layamon's *Brut* that translated or adapted only Geoffrey's narrative.⁶⁵ Second, scholars have separated Geoffrey's narrative of early Britain from the later histories of the Anglo-Saxon and Norman monarchs, the writing of which continued apace during the period. News of Geoffrey's *Historia* spread quickly, likely through the same monastic networks that had brought the Norman histories to England. Henry of Huntington recommended the narrative to Jean de Waruin, providing a synopsis of the narrative in a letter later appended to copies of his *Historia Anglorum*. Although the Trojan origin narrative of Geoffrey's *Historia* did not find its way into Henry's already-complete history, the *Historia Anglorum*, copies of Henry's work carry the letter appended to it. Later in the century, texts like the *Annales* of Alfred of Beverley reflect early attempts to merge the narrative of the

⁶⁴ Gillingham, "Context and Purposes," 112.

⁶⁵ Leckie, *Passage of Dominion*, 23-5.

early Britons with the line of Anglo-Saxon kings.⁶⁶ However, both Geoffrey's material and his structure for insular history were so novel that attempts to reconcile them were, according to William Leckie, ultimately abandoned.⁶⁷ While a full discussion of the genealogies and historical works that sought to merge Geoffrey's history with the later rulers of England lies outside the scope of this dissertation, the evolution of the Brutus narrative points towards additional concerns and conflicts that Anglo-Norman historians sought to address.

The Trojan narrative provided England with a notable foundation by a fierce and free people, it also allowed for extended meditation on land, legitimacy, and, above all, order, during a period when all of these concepts were in flux. Geoffrey's *Historia* is thought to have appeared after the death of the third Norman ruler of England, Henry I, in 1135. Henry's his sole legitimate son, William, had drowned in a shipwreck in 1120, and subsequently Henry had not been able to produce another male heir. His death left the new Norman dynasty on shaky ground, exposing it to incursions from rival kingdoms that were both military and marital.

Before his death, Henry had attempted to secure the succession of his daughter, Matilda, by gathering his barons and having them swear fealty to her. Matilda was then remarried to Geoffrey of Anjou, thereby uniting two powerful and competitive neighboring kingdoms in France. However, the Norman barons in particular were wary of such a succession, and it seems as though at Henry's death they pushed for Theobald, Count of Blois and nephew of William the Conqueror, to assume the throne of the *regnum* and to

⁶⁶ Leckie, *Passage of Dominion*, 45-6.

⁶⁷ Leckie, *Passage of Dominion*, 100-101.

defend the Norman Vexin against the threat of invasion by the king of France.⁶⁸ It was ultimately not Theobald but his younger brother Stephen, a retainer and courtier of Henry I, who crossed the Channel and whom the barons crowned king in place of Matilda and Geoffrey. Thus, the fate of the *regnum* hung in the balance in the late 1130s, torn between two main territorial and dynastic factions. Stephen's reign gave rise to a period still known as the Anarchy, and although more recent evaluations of the reign have somewhat rehabilitated Stephen as a ruler, the events of the 1140s and early 1150s would alter the power dynamic within England's ruling house, and also between England, Normandy, and the neighboring kingdoms irrevocably.

The dedication history of the *Historia Regum Britanniae* betrays this conflict, as do some of the early adaptations of the narrative. The prologue of the *Historia* carried a dedication to Robert, duke of Gloucester, the illegitimate son of Henry I and a supporter of Matilda after 1138. It addressed him as "a Henry reborn for our time." but also, in some to Waleran, count of Meulan, who formed the "twin pillar of our kingdom."⁶⁹ Waleran remained Stephen's strongest supporter in Normandy, where he served as Stephen's lieutenant until his territories were overrun in 1141 and he surrendered to Geoffrey of Anjou and Matilda. The dedication of the *Historia* to the two most powerful military figures on both sides of the Channel at the start of Stephen's reign seems to reinforce its central message: that a strong monarch and unified government is the only hope for the realm. That unity, however, would not hold, and instead the ambivalent nature of the Trojans made it possible for parties on both sides of the Channel, as well as the soon-to-emerge Angevin dynasty, to

⁶⁸ See R. Helmerichs, "Ad Tutandos Patriae Fines: The Defense of Normandy, 1135," in *The Normans and their Adversaries at War: Essays in Memory of Warren C. Hollister*, ed. R. Abels and B. Bachrach (Woodbridge: 2001), 129-148, pp.144-7.

⁶⁹ HRB, prologue, 23. Reeve's introduction, ix-x, provides further discussion of the dedication history.

appropriate the narrative. Each shared in Geoffrey's aspiration for a strong and unified rule; the question, rather, was not *how* but *who* should do so.

The transition between ruling powers in England will be discussed in greater length in the following chapter on the Prose *Brut*, but for the time being, these works, and the genealogical writing that was also being undertaken at this time, provide significant evidence that, when the *Historia* was considered, it was being done in reference to the existing body of historical works on the history of Britain, and not "in splendid isolation," as Hanning would have it. As the dispute between Stephen and Matilda wore on, another writer would offer his interpretation of the Trojan origins of the Britons: the Norman poet Wace.

Little is known about Wace's career save what has been gleaned from the author's own works. Born on the channel island of Jersey around the turn of the twelfth century, it is believed that Wace was educated in France and spent his professional career in Normandy, as a translator and teacher (he styles himself *maitre* as well as *clerc lisant*) in the court of Caen.⁷⁰ After compiling some shorter vernacular poems and hagiographies, Wace turned his interests to history, and the text that first captured his interest was the *Historia regum Britanniae*. Wace's *Roman de Brut* adapted Geoffrey's Latin text into a 15,000 line poem, and his later history of the Normans, the *Roman de Rou*, won (albeit temporarily) the patronage of Henry II.⁷¹

At first glance, and in most surveys of Wace's work, the *Historia regum Britanniae* appears to be a strange choice for the Norman poet's first foray into history. The date of completion of the work, 1155, and the patronage of the *Roman de Rou*, have led most to speculate that the *Roman de Brut* was produced with the aim of flattering the young monarch

⁷⁰ F. Le Saux, *A Companion to Wace* (London: 2005), 1-10.

⁷¹ Urbanski, *Writing History for the King*, 83-4.

and securing financial support for the author.⁷² However, Wace's unwillingness to flatter Henry, or anyone for that matter, seems to stand out as the salient feature of both works. Wace's *Roman de Brut*, with its greatly expanded section on King Arthur, has also been seen as the forerunner of many of the French romances about the king.⁷³ Yet Wace insisted that his work was a history, and the question of why a Norman poet would choose the ancient Britons as his subject admits no easy answer.

The fact that the *Roman de Brut* did not expand Geoffrey's *Historia* did not mean that people were not thinking about the text's implications for present day England and Normandy. Quite the opposite. Wace's works reveal an acute political sense, and his treatment of the *Historia* shows that he found Geoffrey's work not just interesting, but hostile to the Normans, because it placed a more ancient and distinct line of Trojans in control of the island. In his translation, Wace set out not only to diffuse this implication, but also to direct its message towards one of co-operation, bringing the Trojan elements of Britain's origin narrative closer into line with those of the Normans, and reinforcing Dudo's portrayal of the Normans as the unifiers of various peoples. He did this by exploiting his gift for poetry as well as the ambiguities inherent in Trojan histories. In the words of Dolores Buttry, Wace "re-politicized" the *Historia*, subtly altering the narrative to lend legitimacy to a different set of concerns.⁷⁴ The Britons' Trojan heritage lay at the heart of Wace's reworking.

⁷² This theory appears to be corroborated with the statement by Layamon that Wace presented a copy of the *Roman* to Henry II's wife, Eleanor of Aquitaine. See Blacker, *Faces of Time*, 175-77; Le Saux, *Companion*, 7. For an early note of skepticism see J.S.P. Tatlock, *The Legendary History of Britain: Geoffrey of Monmouth's Historia Regum Britanniae and Its Early Vernacular Versions*. (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1950), 467-68.

⁷³ Le Saux, *Companion*, 85-88 and 94.

⁷⁴ D. Buttry, "Authority Refracted: Personal Principle and Translation in Wace's *Roman de Brut*," in *The Politics of Translation in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*, ed. R. Blumenfeld-Kosinski, L. von Flotow, and D. Russel, (Ottawa: 2001) 85-106. Blacker, by contrast, thought that Wace's lack of interest in the political consequences of division resulted in a "de-politicizing" of Geoffrey's text (*Faces of Time*, 97). See also Zatta, "Translating the *Historia*," 149.

Wace alters strikingly little of Geoffrey's narrative, or rather, the narrative of the *Variant Version* that formed his principal source for the *Roman de Brut*. Internally, however, Wace emphasizes or downplays different aspects of the history of the Britons in order to pave the way for a more complicated system of inheritance. Where Geoffrey's Britons inherit the desolate island of Britain via prophecy and are granted perpetual dominion over its entirety, Wace's Britons master it temporarily, and maintain it with the aid of other branches of the family. Prophecy, for Wace, gives way to an intimate, and ultimately a legal, framework of family relationships, which the poet calls *dreiture*.

The most significant, and the most commented upon, removal of prophecy from the *Historia* that Wace undertakes is his omission of Merlin's prophecies about the kings who will come after Arthur, which took up an entire book (book 6) of Geoffrey's text.⁷⁵ However, it is clear from a much earlier stage that Wace's outlook on prophecy, as well as the nature of the Trojan tenure of Britain, is different from Geoffrey of Monmouth's. As Brutus and his followers leave Greece, Wace describes Diana as a prophetess, but also as "a devil (diabes) who deceived the people by sorcery."⁷⁶ Proof of her perfidy is soon offered to Wace's audience. Diana promises Brutus the island of Albion, upon which he will build a new Troy and father famous offspring. Albion, however, is described as being free of giants, and, in a key omission, the grant is not given, as in the *Historia*, to "you and your heirs to dwell in forevermore." After the Trojans land on the island and the giants are defeated, what should be a triumphal moment becomes a taste of future disappointment. Wace uses the

⁷⁵ Le Saux, *Companion*, 95; J. Blacker, "Where Wace Feared to Tread: Latin Commentaries on Merlin's Prophecies in the Reign of Henry II," *Arthuriana* 6 (1996), 36-52.

⁷⁶ *Roman de Brut*, 636-37. "Diabes esteit, ki la gent / Deceveit par enchantement."

Britons' tenure to discuss the changes in names and languages brought about after the Britons were driven out, never to return.⁷⁷

Wace's *Roman de Brut* is less about the perpetual right of the Trojan Britons to possess their land, but it is unequivocal about the perpetual right to freedom granted by Trojan ancestry, even at the cost of all else. When Brutus takes up the cause of the Trojans in Greece, he petitions Pandrasus on behalf of his enslaved people, lecturing him that "because of the shame and ignominy of the noble ancestry of Dardanus... the captives have joined together, they have formed an alliance, like a people who ought to be at one...each one desires, as is their right, to be free."⁷⁸ This is Wace's first invocation of the Trojan *dreit* of freedom, accessible to each of the descendants of Dardanus alike, and as he later shows, even to Antenor's Trojans. Brutus' call for unity is be echoed later at many critical points in the *Roman de Brut*, but the emphasis on shared origins creates a different power dynamic among the Britons than the one found in the *Historia regum Britanniae*. In the *Roman de Brut*, the territory of Britain provides the backdrop for a story of freedom and family ties.

Brutus and his followers leave Greece in the *Roman de Brut* for the same reasons cited by Geoffrey, although Wace ends Mempricius' counsel to leave rather than live among their enemies with a more ominous note that foreshadows the future destruction of the Trojans.⁷⁹ After they leave the Mediterranean and encounter Corineus' band, Antenor's descendant becomes less a follower of Brutus and more of "a very good friend."⁸⁰ Wace's description of

⁷⁷ *Roman de Brut*, 1169-1200.

⁷⁸ *Roman de Brut*, 237-252. Weiss translates "chescuns" as "everyone," but it appears that in the context of Brutus' oration, in which the subjects are constantly "the captives" referred to in the singular and plural, that a better rendering of this word would be "each one" (i.e. *of them*).

⁷⁹ "We will diminish and they will increase, we will decline and they will grow; and if they can once get the upper hand, you'll see, you or those alive then, that all the Trojans will die, and we'll have well deserved it." (tr. Weiss) *Roman de Brut* 549-55.

⁸⁰ *Roman de Brut*, 791-2, "Brutus l'ama mult et cheri / E mult ad en lui bon ami."

Corineus' large physical presence and his mention that Corineus took land for himself and called it Cornwall has led some to argue that the narrative came to represent a separate foundation.⁸¹ Although Wace does make it clear later that Corineus served Brutus, the differences in descent between the two Trojan parties, as well as the social distance between Brutus and Corineus, is downplayed in the *Roman de Brut*.

Wace's sensitivity to family ties, employed throughout the narrative, provides a model for both good and bad behavior, but in two special cases it acquires something akin to legal force. In both, stability within the realm is threatened by outsiders, and in both, Wace puts ideas of right (*dreiture*) into the mouths of his interlocutors. The first such episode comes at a point of tension between two brothers, Brenne and Belin, who have both inherited parts of Britain. Brenne, the younger of the two, has rebelled against his older brother, fled to the Continent, and returned with an army. As the two sides survey each other across the field, their mother, Tonwenne, intervenes to make peace between them. The *Roman de Brut* shifts this episode from a straightforward accord to a dramatic invocation of familial ties. Tonwenne, bare-chested and weeping, inveighs against Brenne for threatening his family with foreign conquest. ("You who come from a foreign land, and bring foreigners to destroy your own domains. Is this the joy you bring your friends...?")⁸² Shortly thereafter, Tonwenne turns from mother to mediator, telling her youngest son,

Fai ceste folie remaindre!
Se de tun frere te vuels plaindre
Jeo t'en ferai par jugement
tun dreit avoir plenierement
Si tu diz ceo qu'il te chaça
E de terre t'essilla
Tu as tort, ne diz pas raisun

⁸¹ M. Lamont, "The Kynde Bloode of England: Remaking Englishness in the Middle English Prose *Brut*" (Unpublished Ph.D Dissertation, UCLA: 2007), 48-53.

⁸² *Roman de Brut*, 2742-45.

Nuls ne t'essila si tu nun.

*Put an end to this folly! If you want to complain about your brother, I will have you awarded, judicially, your full rights. If you say he pursued you and banished you from your land, you are wrong, you are not in the right.*⁸³

Tonwenne's judgment is ultimately accepted, the brothers reconciled. Their military prowess is channeled outward, towards Rome, but before their campaign even begins, Wace signals that a clear victory has been won, with unity prevailing over familial discord and the dangers of foreign invasion.⁸⁴

A later invocation by Wace expands both the scope and the stakes of kinship. After Britain has been conquered by the Romans, stripped of fighting men, and then abandoned by its conquerors, the Britons are forced to appeal to their relatives outside of the island for aid. Guencelin, the Archbishop of Canterbury, travels to Brittany, where the Romans have transplanted Britain's military might. His appeal to Aldroen, King of Brittany, stresses the perilous conditions of the Britons, placing no small emphasis on Brittany as the cause of Britain's decline. However, his tone shifts when he asks for the aid of the Bretons, in a passage Wace underscores with both repetition and rhetorical flourish.

Bretun estes e nus Bretun
E parenz sumes, ço savum
E nus devum estre tuit un
E tuit devum avoir comun
l'uns deit par l'autres estre rescus
E vus par nus, e nus par vus
Busuin avum, or nus secor,
Si t'iert turné a grant enor
*e tul deiz faire par nature
de parenté e de dreiture.*

You are British and we are British and we are related, we know, and should be as one and hold everything in common. The one should be rescued by the other, both you by us and us by you. We

⁸³ *Roman de Brut*, 2763-70.

⁸⁴ Wace's language echoes the earlier speech of Mempricius, when Tonwenne cautions Brenne that the foreigners he has brought with him to depose his brother Belin would do the same to him, if they got the upper hand ("si il le desus en aveient," 2810)

*are in need, now help us; it will redound to your honor. And you should do it out of natural feeling
for our blood-ties and for justice.*⁸⁵

Both the speech and its resulting effect are embellishments from Wace's source. In the *Historia* as well as the *Variant Version*, Aldroen tells Guencelin that while he once would have sought to take control of Britain, he now wants nothing to do with the enfeebled country, and grudgingly sends his brother Constantine to aid the Britons. In the *Roman de Brut*, however, Aldroen is overcome by Guencelin's appeal and, weeping, tells the bishop that he will do everything in his power to help, including sending his brother and two thousand of his best knights.⁸⁶ Constantine's rescue of the insular Britons becomes not an isolated incident, but rather the result of a deliberate decision to preserve unity and solidarity among the Trojan Britons.

The aspects of Wace's work that have, to this point, drawn the most attention from scholars are his treatment of the prophecies governing Britain's future kings, as well as his embellishment of the Arthurian material in the narrative. While the material contained in the *Roman de Brut* would enjoy circulation on both sides of the Channel and contribute to Continental romance writing about Arthur and his knights, Wace's role in assimilating and expanding the role of Trojan origins within historical discourse is no less striking, and ultimately just as influential. Even though it does not continue the earlier history of the Britons past where Geoffrey's *Historia* or the *Variant Version* leave off, it is increasingly clear that all of these texts enjoyed immediate influence and relevance in all parts of the Anglo-Norman *regnum*, as they were spread among a learned network of clerics and an increasingly literate (or literary) class of insular and continental nobility.

⁸⁵ *Roman de Brut*, 6387-96.

⁸⁶ Wace goes so far as to suggest that Aldroen himself would have gone to liberate the Britons, had he not needed to fight his own wars against the French. *Roman de Brut*, 6421-23, "Il meïsmes od els alast / Se il peüst e il osast / Mais il aveit guerre as Francais."

Indeed, if a central concern of all of these Trojan histories was order and legitimacy, then we may see two competing versions of supremacy at work in the *Historia* and the *Roman de Brut*. These versions centered upon two competing loci of power within the *regnum*: England and Normandy. In the century following the conquest of England by the Norman dukes, the relative status of each territory underwent continuous reassessment, as control of both territories passed between William the Conqueror's relatives. Just as the reign of Henry I reunited the territories under the same nominal head, the crisis of succession that ensued rekindled questions of influence between the two halves of the realm.

Geoffrey's *Historia*, then, ran contrary not just to the Norman use of Trojan origins, but to the traditional power dynamic that Rollo and his ancestors claimed: their ability to make many peoples into one. Stability runs through the king, but particularly an English king. In hailing Robert of Gloucester as "a new Henry, reborn for our time," Geoffrey was likely referring to the first Henry's assumption of the throne of England and ensuing military campaigns against his brother, Robert Curthose, for possession of Normandy.⁸⁷ The smaller number of manuscripts with dedications mentioning Waleran of Meulan's service to the realm likewise reinforces what must have been a growing political awareness among the Norman nobility. The patrimony of the Norman dukes had become of secondary importance to the new acquisition.

In this light, it is clearer why the Trojan history of Britain would have been singled out by a continental cleric and his audience in Caen. Wace's Britons are fierce and independent, just as Rollo and his followers had been, but where Geoffrey's *Historia* stresses the unity of Britain above all else, the *Roman de Brut* stresses cooperation beyond Britain's

⁸⁷ See above, p. 57.

borders. Family connections take Wace's Britons beyond the borders of their island, and Wace's elimination of the prophecies that guarantee the Britons future influence, as well as his digressions on the modern translations of place names, anticipate the future conquest of the island by another group whose *parenté* gives them the right to claim the territory: the Normans.⁸⁸

Wace's choice of text, as well as his choices within the translation, likewise were not isolated to the material in the *Historia* which he set in French verse. They were instead conditioned by the political climate of the preceding decades, and by the increasing presence and prevalence of competing historical narratives about Troy in territories controlled by the Normans. The challenges posed by Geoffrey of Monmouth to the prior historiography, both in Britain and in Normandy, were not simply ignored, or confined to a particular court at a specific moment, they could only be addressed by continued historical writing. By positing the Britons as a race of valiant (and, perhaps, pious) conquerors, Wace's emendations to the *Historia* provided successive historians with an important tool to do so, and allowed for the Britons to be incorporated into the larger narrative of England's history.

Conclusion: Which Trojans?

Roughly sixty years after the completion of the *Roman de Brut*, Wace's vernacular translation of Geoffrey's *Historia* was itself translated, this time into English by the poet Laȝamon. Laȝamon exchanged Wace's octosyllabic couplets for a metric form that approximated the long-line alliterative poetry of Old English epic.⁸⁹ In keeping with his

⁸⁸ Ingledew, "Book of Troy," 688. For Wace's interest in place names, see Le Saux, *Companion*, 110-12.

⁸⁹ F. Le Saux, *Laȝamon's Brut: The Poem and Its Sources*, (Cambridge: 1989), 24-58.

source, Laȝamon also declined to expand the narrative past the expulsion of the Britons and devoted significant space to the reign and exploits of King Arthur. Although his poem does not survive in as many extant copies as Wace's, and certainly nowhere near as many as Geoffrey's *Historia*, Laȝamon's *Brut* has been used by scholars to indicate the continued influence of Trojan and Arthurian history among the aristocratic classes of England. In Ian Short's formulation, "People whose grandparents had listened to Wace's *Brut* in French in the 1150s could, by 1210, have been natural listeners to Laȝamon's Middle English version of it."⁹⁰

In one sense, Short's statement is absolutely correct. The final decades of the twelfth century saw a continued increase in the amount of vernacular history and romance produced under the patronage of England's nobility. Genealogies as well as histories continued to assimilate the legendary origins of Britain into individual family trees. In addition, more material about the Trojans came into the realm of vernacular literature, giving additional weight and nuance to the discussion of individual characters. Thirteenth century Englishmen (and women) were the direct beneficiaries of the twelfth-century outpouring of historical writing.

The circumstances under which Wace's and Laȝamon's audiences heard the narratives would have differed in one key respect. The conflict between England and Normandy for supremacy within the *regnum* had been settled in favor of England. Under Richard and John, larger and larger parts of Normandy had fallen under the control of the French king, Philip Augustus. Following the decisive battle at Bouvines in 1214, England

⁹⁰ Ian Short, "Patrons and Polyglots: French Literature in Twelfth-Century England." *Anglo-Norman Studies* 14 (1991): 229-249, 248.

was isolated from her holdings in Normandy. Thus, the natural audience of Lazamon's *Brut* would have been a smaller subset of the audience of Wace's.

They also would have heard a different message from Lazamon's translation, or rather, a message that Wace himself had suppressed. The prophetic guarantee of Britain to Brutus and his followers is rehabilitated in the Lazamon's poem, first through alteration of Diana's prophecy (which warns Brutus of the giants in Britain), and then through Merlin. Although the reign of the Britons ends with their conquest by the English, the poet hints that a day may still come when the Britons would return to reclaim their land.⁹¹ With the territory of England beset by internal conflict between John and his baronage, and threatened from across the channel by a reinvigorated French monarchy, the focus once again returned to Britain, the regnal unit that Geoffrey of Monmouth had argued must remain securely in the hands of its rightful occupants, the Trojan Britons. The narrative is no longer about uniting many peoples into one, but rather about one people and their struggles against the outside world.

The new historical writing which centered on Troy, then, provided more than just a venerable past to peoples who lacked one. It was not a parody of the historian's craft undertaken by a new generation of entertainers. Rather, the stories of the different groups of Trojan ancestors in Europe, their struggles, triumphs, and treacheries, virtues and vices alike became one of the languages in which legitimacy was conceptualized and contested. The separate branches of the Trojan line could be made into allies or rivals vying for superiority, and the capacity to do so lay in the hands of the writers who invoked them. The singularity of Geoffrey of Monmouth's history is striking, yet the text becomes even richer when the

⁹¹ *Lazamon's Brut*, ed. W.R.J. Barron and C. Weinberg (New York: 1995), 825. Compare with Wace, *Roman de Brut*, 14825-58.

historical and political climates that informed its author are taken into consideration. They show the readiness with which Geoffrey understood the themes of Norman historiography and the deftness with which he subverted them. The variations on the story of Brutus and his descendants that followed the *Historia Regum Britanniae* likewise call attention to the familiarity and frequency with which the history was interpreted and used for edification and for entertainment.

It is notable, yet not surprising, that the places of contention among these authors fall within the areas of greatest similarity. The differences between the two lines of descent (Aeneas and Antenor), the use and nature of prophecy, and the way in which territory is acquired in the different narratives appear minimal. We have seen, however, that eleventh and twelfth century writers used these subtle differences to rework their own narratives, reacting not only to their source texts, but also to the wider historical discussion of Trojan origins taking place in medieval Europe. If Troy provided a common source of legitimacy and moral lessons about land, freedom, and foundation for the earliest historians of the twelfth century, at the end of the century it had become a basis for comparison and competition, as histories were evaluated and adapted for new circumstances. Writers like Dudo of St. Quentin drew upon such knowledge to provide claims to legitimacy but also edifying models of rulers, uniting Trojan military virtue and freedom with the ability of its rulers to become not just leaders of men, but unifiers of different groups. Geoffrey of Monmouth, on the other hand, employed those same themes of freedom and virtue to the opposite end, demonstrating that the incursion of different groups into a stable and, it appears, a limited territory could have disastrous consequences.

In the centuries that followed, the discussion of legitimacy and stability in English history turned inward, to questions of sovereignty over the territory of Britain. In the next chapter, we will see how the insular, defensive resonances of the narrative proposed by Geoffrey of Monmouth and Laȝamon would come to the fore, augmented by new historical writing about Britain's first inhabitants. Yet Wace's *Roman de Brut* remained an alternative source for later authors to draw upon, and to address the position of England in the wider world through its narrative. The invention of Trojan origins for Britain owed a great deal to a broader, Norman context for historical writing. As chroniclers, translators, and other historical authors sought to assimilate or rework that narrative, they also gave weight to the idea that Troy was the preferred model for discussions of authority and legitimacy. As their histories were reworked in turn, successive generations would add their own interpretations to the foundations provided by Britain's Trojan exiles. Those lessons lived on, like the early Britons, waiting to be redeployed when the need for them arose.

Chapter Two

Enter Albina: Dominion and Domination in Fourteenth-Century England

During the first decades of the reign of Edward III (r. 1327-1377), the landscape of English historical writing underwent another dramatic change, as new Latin and vernacular histories further transformed the narratives provided by Geoffrey of Monmouth, Wace, and Laȝamon. The narratives of these later chroniclers, for the most part, were not limited to the deeds of the ancient Britons, but rather provided a continuous account of England's history from its origins up to near contemporary events. Furthermore, they were not only concerned with the transition of power from the Britons to the peoples that followed, as the twelfth-century historians had been, but in the pre-history of the island. If Geoffrey's Trojans had encountered giants on an island that was called Albion, where had those giants, and that name, come from?

As with the rest of the *Historia Regum Britanniae*, the name Albion was not Geoffrey's invention, but a small part of his great embellishment. The island of Britain had been referred to as "Albion" since the time of Pliny the Elder, and one stream of interpretation ran that the island had taken its name from the white cliffs (*insula de albis rupibus*) visible from across the Channel.¹ During the 1330s and 1340s, however, a new explanation began to appear in a number of romance and historical works. This story attributed the name Albion, as well as its gigantic inhabitants, to an exiled Syrian or Greek princess named Albina and

¹ This explanation was found, among other places, in Ranulph Higden's universal history *Polychronicon*, composed around 1327. C. Babington and J.R. Lumby eds, *Polychronicon Ranulphi Higden*, 9 vols. Rolls Series 41 (London: Longman & Co., 1865-86).

her sisters, who landed on its shores after being set adrift in a rudderless boat. Once on the island, Albina and her sisters desire male company and are impregnated, either by the devil or by incubi, producing the giants that Brutus and his followers would defeat to take possession of the island.² The Albina story stands at the beginning of the anonymous chronicle tradition of the *Brut* as a prologue, linked to the Galfridian history in some cases by a single line of text. This short narrative, made shorter by the Latin and vernacular chroniclers, represents a notable difference between the histories of Geoffrey and his contemporaries and the anonymous *Brut* chronicles which appeared in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

A century and a half after Geoffrey of Monmouth and his earliest translators had introduced England and Normandy to Brutus and his illustrious descendants, the ancient history of the Britons was still gaining attention and garnering new meaning. The Arthurian material had spawned cycles of romances both insular and continental, but the historical claims to territory provided by Brutus still bore weight. At the turn of the century, Edward I (r. 1272-1307) had justified his overlordship of Scotland with claims of Scottish homage to Arthur and to Brutus, and the Scots had countered with a mythical founder of their own: the Egyptian princess Scota, who had settled Scotland before the fall of Troy, and had even made inroads into the abandoned island of Albion. Albina and her sisters drifted into the middle of this historiographical struggle, but their presence in Britain's history speaks to more than the simple occupation of territory. Albina's story tapped into currents of uncertainty about the influence of women on England's monarchy, as well as concerns over

² The lengthiest enumeration of the versions of the Albina story is L. Ruch, *Albina and Her Sisters: the Foundation of Albion* (Amherst, NY: Cambria Press, 2013).

civil unrest, evil counsel, and improper influence already present in Britain's legendary history and in the political climate of early fourteenth-century England.

The first decades of the reign of Edward III (1327-1377) witnessed the appearance of the Albina story in poetry and in prose, in Latin, Middle English, and in Anglo-Norman, particularly in the Short and Long Versions of the Anglo-Norman *Brut* which would form the basis of the Middle English Prose *Brut* later in the century. The Anglo-Norman chronicles have been the subject of dedicated study by Julia Marvin, but much more remains to be discovered about their impact in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.³ In what follows, I consider the Anglo-Norman chronicles alongside other English and Latin historical works composed during the first decade and a half of Edward III's reign, paying special attention to the roles that Albina plays within the texts. The transmission of the Albina story, I argue, should not be considered as a simple rendering or translation from one language into another. Rather, the compilers of these histories drew upon different, and sometimes multiple influences, recombining those narratives to produce the story that best suited their texts.

I. The Historical Context: Edwardian Arthuriana and Dynastic Disruption

For historians and literary scholars alike, the most apparent political context for this new wave of writing about England's early inhabitants was as part of a continuum of political Arthuriana that had assumed a prominent role during the reign of Edward III's

³ Most notably in her edition, *The Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut Chronicle: An Edition and Translation* Medieval Chronicles 4 (Oxford: Boydell Press, 2006). John Spence discusses the Arthurian elements of these chronicles in his *Imagining History in Anglo-Norman Prose Chronicles* (York: York Medieval Press, 2013), 40-73. He does not comment on the earlier portions of the histories, or on the Albina narrative.

grandfather, Edward I. From at least the end of the thirteenth century, the romances of Arthur and his knights enjoyed a central role in chivalric pageantry, in England as well as in Europe more broadly. Round Tables were held at tournaments, casting kings and knights in the roles of their romance heroes. In England, these ceremonies enjoyed the royal patronage of Edward I, whose cultivated reputation for chivalry and martial prowess made him an avid promoter of all things Arthurian. Throughout his life, he sought to associate himself with the greatest British knight and renowned conqueror, and he encouraged his court to do the same. In 1278, he had the tomb of Arthur and Guinevere opened and the bones displayed on the altar of Glastonbury Abbey.⁴ In the following year, Roger Mortimer, baron of Wigmore, celebrated the knighting of his sons by Edward with a lavish round table at his castle of Kenilworth. On the occasion of Edward's second marriage to Margaret of France in 1299, Edward presided over the wedding banquet crowned as Arthur himself. It is perhaps fitting that, sometime after 1312, the anonymous monk of St. Albans who composed the *Annales Angliae et Scotiae*, filled in the details of Edward I's coronation by inserting the description of Arthur's coronation from the *Historia Regum Britanniae*.⁵

At least in England, this interest in Arthur was more than a leitmotif of fourteenth-century chivalry. Edward I's translation of Arthur's relics from Wales to England during the first decades of his reign went hand in hand with his conquest of the Welsh, just as the chivalry he encouraged at tournaments was used to promote campaigns against Scotland during the latter years of his reign. Nor was English interest in their British past limited to Arthur. Instead, as Britain's legendary history became the subject of renewed attention and

⁴ R. Loomis, "Edward I: Arthurian Enthusiast," *Speculum* 28 (1953): 114-27, 116. M. Prestwich, *Edward I*, (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1988), 170-88; A. Ruddick, *English Identity and Political Culture in the Fourteenth Century*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 167-82, esp. 174-76.

⁵ Loomis, "Arthurian Enthusiast," 120-21. Ruddick further notes the widely-identified Arthurian themes in Edward I's entry into London after the success of the Welsh campaign in fourteenth-century annals (*English Identity*, 175).

scrutiny, other elements of the narrative presented themselves as apt for historical and political parallel.⁶

Following the chaos of Edward II's reign, Edward's grandson appeared to pick up where his grandfather had left off. The military successes of his reign in Scotland as well as in France provided evidence of the king's knightly prowess and cemented the need for a loyal band of warriors to surround the monarch. In 1344, it appears that Edward III sought to make the Round Table a permanent fixture of his reign by adding a lavish chamber onto his palace at Windsor which would serve as the meeting place for his finest hand-picked knights, complete with a replica of the table itself.⁷ This chamber later served as the meeting place for the Order of the Garter, whose members were limited to the finest knights in the realm and were appointed by the king directly.

However, as the first chapter has shown of Geoffrey of Monmouth and his early translators, it remained impossible to present the history of the early Britons as solely, or even primarily, imperial. The ambiguities inherent in Britain's legendary founders mirrored the uncertain and unstable political context of the fourteenth century. By passing directly from Edward I's expansionist policies to those of his grandson, historians who would see the use of Britain's Trojan origins solely as an exercise in legitimating Edward's conquests minimize or ignore another critical context for these early chronicles of Edward III's reign:

⁶ Edward I's claims to overlordship in Scotland were made partly in terms of Arthur's conquest, but mostly as a consequence of Brutus' possession of the entire island of Britain and his bequest of Scotland to his son Albanact. For copies of some of the returns, see E.L.G. Stones ed. and trans. *Anglo-Scottish Relations 1174-1328*, (London: 1965); see also J. P. Carley and J. Crick, "Constructing Albion's Past," in J. P. Carley ed., *Glastonbury Abbey and the Arthurian Tradition* (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 2001), 347-418, esp. pp. 359-73; Prestwich, *Edward I*, 490-96; Loomis, "Arthurian Enthusiast," 122.

⁷ J. Munby, R. Barber and R. Brown, *Edward III's Round Table at Windsor: the House of the Round Table and the Windsor Festival of 1344* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2007).

the deposition and murder of his father, Edward II, and the appropriation of Edward III's minority government by his mother, Isabella and her lover, Roger Mortimer.

Edward II's rule can be characterized as one of faction and disorder among the nobility, as well as indecision and impropriety on the part of the king. A series of royal favorites, notably Piers Gaveston and the Despensers, Hugh the Elder and Hugh the Younger, were seen to hold inordinate sway over Edward, enriching themselves at the expense of the Crown and any of their baronial opponents. Whether the "improper affection and love" of Edward for his favorites mentioned by so many contemporary accounts was, as some have interpreted, evidence of the monarch's homosexuality is less important than the detached and sporadic manner in which Edward dealt with the complaints of his nobility.⁸ Banished favorites were suddenly or secretly recalled and restored by the king, and in the end conflict broke out. By the 1320s, Edward's involvement with the Despensers, particularly Hugh the Younger, had alienated not only a large and powerful portion of the nobility—Roger Mortimer, grandson of the Roger who had lavishly entertained Edward I at Kenilworth Castle, was in exile in France—but also his own wife. Isabella had been sent to France to negotiate a peace, but she refused to return, comparing her situation in court to widowhood.⁹ A year later, she and Mortimer landed in England at the head of a small army, sweeping away the Despenser regime and taking power in the name of her son, Edward. The only problem was that, despite her claims to widowhood, her husband, King Edward II, was still very much alive.

While the misrule and favoritism displayed by Edward II was nothing new in English history, the manner in which this crisis was resolved was novel indeed. A parliament held in

⁸ M. Prestwich, *Plantagenet England 1225-1360* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2005), 178-213.

⁹ W. Childs ed. and trans., *Vita Edwardi Secundi: The Life of Edward II*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2005), 243; Prestwich, *Plantagenet England*, 213-14.

London in January of 1327 deposed Edward II in favor of his son, who was still a minor. English kings had unsuccessfully (as Henry I had tried to do with Matilda) and successfully (as Stephen had done with Henry II) ceded power after their death with the agreement of their barons, and collections of barons had increasingly become more effective at exacting demands from the monarchy (as they had done with John). Never before had the barons, through parliament or otherwise, deposed a sitting king.¹⁰ Even though the barons and Londoners succeeded in declaring Edward III the king, and in placing Isabella in charge during his minority, the short span of time between Edward II's deposition and shocking murder in Berkeley castle demonstrates how tenuous the arrangement actually was.¹¹

Isabella's minority government was no less perilous, and her lover's blatant self-enrichment combined with reversals in Scotland brought the experiment to an abrupt end. Less than three years had elapsed before the eighteen-year-old Edward III, in what was to be the first of many displays of boldness in his reign, broke from his confinement in Nottingham castle and, with the help of a few conspirators, captured Mortimer. With the execution of his guardian, he assumed the kingship of England for himself. While England's military position in Scotland soon improved with the English success at Halidon Hill in 1333, the first decade of Edward III's reign looked back onto the uncertainty of his fathers' rule as well. Isabella remained alive and in the country, and hostilities mounted across the Channel with the French.

Many contemporary chronicles try to preserve order in the succession between Edward II and Edward III rather than disrupt it. If they do mention the murder, the blame

¹⁰ As Michael Prestwich comments, "chronicle tales taken from Geoffrey of Monmouth's fantasy Arthurian history may have told of kings being removed from office, but did not provide any details of how to do it." *Plantagenet England*, 216.

¹¹ Several accounts of the murder in contemporary chronicles allege that Edward was killed by sodomy with either a hot copper rod or a coal, so as not to leave any external marks on the corpse.

is placed squarely on Mortimer, and only in rare cases during the minority period is Isabella even mentioned at all.¹² Isabella could claim to have been acting in her son's best interest, but it is clear that not everyone must have seen things that way. While Isabella was in France, Edward II attempted to convince her to return, first by his own letters, and then by enlisting bishops to plead his case. The *Vita Edwardi Secundi*, composed during Edward II's reign, breaks off immediately before Isabella's invasion, but ends with a copy of one of these letters. In it, the bishops not only argue that Isabella's fears of the Despensers are unfounded, but also warns her of the risks of her absence and the needs of her husband.¹³ The letter acknowledges Isabelle's power and status, but is afraid of the uncertainty which her separation from her husband might bring. The bishops express this fear in specifically gendered terms: "Alas! If things turn out like this, it may happen—oh what grief!—that we shall perceive as a stepmother her whom we hoped to have as a protector."¹⁴ Having laid out these consequences, the chronicle ends, tersely, with the note that Isabelle and her son refused to return.

It is in this context (a precarious succession, the murder of a sitting king, and the loss of territory both within and outside England's borders) that we first encounter the Albina story attached to narratives of English history. In the analysis that follows, I survey the surviving early texts that introduce the story, paying attention to the evidence offered by historical context and physical copies. My aim is to give a clear, even if not a conclusive picture, of what this treacherous woman with designs on the whole of Britain offered the

¹² J. Taylor, *English Historical Literature in the Fourteenth Century* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), 120-27.

¹³ Childs, *Vita Edwardi Secundi*, 245-46. "I beseech you as a lady, I warn you as a daughter, to return to our lord king, your husband... The English people has a foreboding from these threats that foreigners will come, and says that if the French come, they will plunder the land." Ruddick relates that appeals for the safety and community of England were also being made by Edward II in the context of his official letters (*English Identity*, 204-5).

¹⁴ Childs, *Vita Edwardi Secundi*, 247. "Heu quam sperabamus habuisse et patronam, si sic eveniant, contiget nos, proh dolor! sentire novercam."

medieval chroniclers and poets who adapted her narrative. I do wish to raise two main points about the story and its status in current scholarship. First, the narratives of Albina and her sisters were not an isolated instance of romance intruding upon history, but rather a creative event *within* history writing itself. The Albina story drew upon romance, as well as classical antecedents, but the authors who created the early versions of her narrative did so with the history of Britain in mind. Second, in observing the interactions between the Albina story and the history of Britain (whether in Anglo-Norman, English, or Latin), I argue that the issue of Isabella's regency was at least of equal concern to these early chroniclers as England's claims to Scotland were, and that both resonances persisted as time went on.

The story of Albina and her sisters, therefore, was more than a cautionary tale with misogynist, territorial, and moral baggage attached. The decision to write the story as a history affected not just a compiler's decision to include or exclude material about Albina, but also their decision to reevaluate the legendary past of Britain along with it. As a result, there is no one defining characteristic of the Albina story as history, but rather the amplification of different aspects of Britain's history in connection with her story. Indeed, the plurality of versions of the story which appeared between 1327 and 1340, as well as the languages and texts that they appeared in, defy any clear chronology or uniform application. Nevertheless, the history of an unruly, potentially treasonous woman had consequences beyond her pre-historic naming of the island that would become Britain.

II. *Des Grantz Geanz*: its Content and Context

Current scholarship on the story of Albina and her sisters often begins with an Anglo-Norman poem entitled *Des Grantz Geanz*.¹⁵ The most detailed manuscript version (which I will call the Long Version) exists in a single manuscript, BL MS Cotton Cleopatra D.ix. Composed sometime before 1334, it is also thought to be the earliest. Shorter versions of the poem also exist in some 17 other manuscripts, some of which are contemporary with the earliest version, and some of which date into the fifteenth century.¹⁶ The framework of both the long and the short versions of this story runs as follows.

3,970 years after the creation of the world, an unnamed Greek emperor (who has power over all other kings) gives his thirty daughters, the oldest of whom is named Albina, to thirty nobly-born kings. Due to her pride and high status, Albina cannot countenance being subject to a man of lower social standing and counsels her sisters to murder their husbands in their beds if they will not agree to submit to the sisters' will. Although the sisters agree to carry out the plan, the youngest one cannot bear the thought of murdering her young husband and reveals the plan to him.¹⁷ Upon hearing the news, the husband promises to cherish his wife above all else and informs the emperor of the plot. The emperor calls all his daughters together and, under threat of torture, he extracts a confession from the youngest daughter.

When the plot is revealed, the emperor wishes to kill his wicked daughters, but due to their blood relationship and high estate, his counselors prevail upon him to banish them instead. The women are placed in a rudderless boat and set adrift in the ocean, where, after a

¹⁵ G. Brereton ed., *Des Grantz Geanz: an Anglo-Norman Poem*, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1937).

¹⁶ Brereton, *Des Grantz Geanz*, vi-xi.

¹⁷ In the "Syrian" version of the story (sometimes called the "B" version), the sisters simply murder their husbands. Brereton, *Des Grantz Geanz*, xxxv-vii.

stormy journey, they wash up on the shores of Britain. The women disembark and explore the empty island, which has all manner of wild animals and food. Albina addresses her sisters twice: first, to convince them to appoint her chieftain, since she is the oldest and the first to set foot on its soil, and, then, to decree that she will name the island Albion after herself. The women set about trapping animals and feeding themselves. Having satisfied their basic needs, they begin to desire the company of men. At this point, the devil appears to them in the form of an incubus, and the women become pregnant and give birth to giants, who dwell in the hills and in caves and inhabit the island until the time the Britons arrive 260 years later, in 1136 BCE.

Des Grantz Geanz has attracted attention for its classical and Biblical influences, along with its similarities to Wace's *Roman de Brut*, beginning with its introductory stanza which professes to tell about the giants who first held England and the presence of the narrator within the poem.¹⁸ More broadly, the Albina story has drawn attention for the prominent, if unflattering, position it gives to women. Following Natalie Davis' work on the inversion of gender roles and Patrick Geary's insights on women as loci of memory, scholars of fourteenth- and fifteenth-century literature have examined the narrative elements of Albina's story.¹⁹ They point to Albina's status, claims of privilege, and the legal language which she uses to claim authority over the island of Albion as evidence of a second, parallel foundation

¹⁸ Brereton pointed to parallels between the story of Albina and that of the fifty daughters of king Danaus in Ovid and Horace, and believed that the idea of having the women impregnated by incubi bore the influence of medieval commentaries on Genesis: the *filii dei* who visited and impregnated the daughters of men. *Des Grantz Geanz*, xxxiii-xxxv. For a further exposition of the Danaid tradition and its medieval iterations, see Ruch, *Albina and her Sisters*, 1-34. For the comparison to Wace, see L. Johnson, "Return to Albion," *Arthurian Literature* XIII (1996): 19-40, 28.

¹⁹ N. Davis, "Women on Top," in *Society and Culture in Early Modern France: Eight Essays* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1975), 124-151; P. Geary, *Phantoms of Remembrance, Memory and Oblivion at the End of the First Millennium* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994), pp. 48-80.

narrative within English history.²⁰ In this reading, Albina is not an aberration, whose wickedness is punished and ultimately corrected by Brutus, but rather an alternative source of authority within the history of England.²¹

Within this scholarship, the influence of Georgine Brereton, the first editor of *Des Grantz Geanz*, is still marked. She considered the Long Version of the poem to be the most authoritative since it had the best readings, despite its survival in only one manuscript, British Library MS Cotton Cleopatra D.ix. Likewise, she considered the poetic versions superior to the prose versions—which often appeared in connection with historical narratives—since they contained more detail.²² The subtitle of her edition was “an Anglo-Norman Poem,” and the majority of later scholars have treated the Albina story as the product of a growing romance tradition that was at some point “translated” into historical writing from the original French. In this view, the translators appropriate the historical resonances of the poem, but the Albina story is often considered an add-on. That is to say, it explains some features of the territory conquered by Brutus, but need not go any further. The Long Version of *Des Grantz Geanz* contains an addendum which appears to prove Brereton’s point. At the end of the story in Cotton Cleopatra D.ix, it is revealed that the *auctor* of this story is actually the giant Gogmagog, who recorded the history while imprisoned by Brutus--presumably in between his capture and his fateful wrestling match

²⁰ “Civilizing” aspects of this narrative have been variously posited in the women’s trapping of animals, Ruch, *Albina and Her Sisters*, 66 and 116-24; Johnson, “Return to Albion,” 33-34, or in the commemorative function of their naming of the island, A. Bernau, “Beginning with Albina: Remembering the Nation,” *Exemplaria* 21 (2009): 247-73, 252-53.

²¹ Ruch, *Albina and Her Sisters*, 116-19.

²² She speculated that the “Sryan” version was descended from the “Greek” version, or that the two developed from a common source, but did not comment any further on the matter. *Des Grantz Geanz*, xxxvii.

with Brutus' lieutenant, Corineus-- so that the "merveille de la geste" could be recounted at feasts.²³

The coda in Cotton Cleopatra D.ix, then, would suggest the potential skepticism of its author towards the work as history, or at least a meaning of history and "geste" that leans more toward playfulness than it does historical accuracy.²⁴ Yet even this copy of the text is bound with Latinate historical material, and a Latin passage introduces the vernacular poem.²⁵ The shorter redactions of the poem omit this detail and indeed, many of these exempla are also bound together with histories in their surviving manuscripts. Furthermore, not only are the Short Version manuscripts largely historical in their content, they are also, for the most part, either bi- or tri-lingual, and the earliest exempla date from approximately the time of Cotton Cleopatra D.ix.²⁶ *Des Grantz Geanz* may have originally been an Anglo-Norman poem, but the Albina story was a work that surpassed linguistic boundaries and defied easy classification; its audience was equally diverse. The historical valences of the Albina story thus deserve fuller attention, even in the scholarly *ur-text* of Cotton Cleopatra D.ix.

A closer examination of the work reveals that, even in the Long Version of *Des Grantz Geanz*, there are more influences that could connect it to the tradition of historical

²³ *Des Grantz Geanz* 541-46. "E Brut trestut fist remembrer / Qe autres après pussent saver / La merveille de la geste / Pur conter a haute feste / E qe hom puet avoir en memoire / La merveille del estoire."

²⁴ I do not mean to suggest that these two readings are mutually exclusive, yet there is a tendency in scholarship to privilege romance in these situations. Since at least the late thirteenth century, elements of Geoffrey's history had found their way into popular romances. *Fulk le Fitz Wareyn*, composed in the last half of the thirteenth century, notably has William the Conqueror arrive in Wales and receive a history lesson on Corineus' battle with Gogmagog the giant from a British inhabitant. G. Burgess trans. *Two Medieval Outlaws: Eustace the Monk and Fouke Fitz Waryn* (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 1997), 133.

²⁵ Johnson provides a brief analysis of the contents and collation of the manuscript in "Return to Albion," 38-40. She notes that "*Des Grantz Geanz* has a place, then, as the only vernacular text in a compilation with strong ecclesiastical national interests." (39)

²⁶ Most commonly, these manuscripts contain texts in Latin, but some contain other works in English as well. Lambeth MS 504, while its body text is in French, was collated in the sixteenth century with Latin and English chronicles by Matthew Parker's circle, and it is possible that a fair copy was made from it. See below, Chapter 4.

writing established by Geoffrey of Monmouth and Wace than it has been given credit for, even if no direct borrowing has taken place. The emphasis on territory and proper possession, a strong feature of Wace's *Roman de Brut*, is preserved through Albina's speeches to her sisters on the island, proclaiming herself to be their lord, and her taking *seisin* of it by walking around all of it. Furthermore, both the Long and Short versions of *Des Grantz Geanz* emphasize the role that Fortune plays in delivering the women to the island, both through their transportation in a "rudderless boat," and the sisters' own avowal that "fortune has granted them this land."²⁷ As the previous chapter illustrated, the role of Fortune was critical in the construction of Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia* and in its interpretation by Wace. Thus, the invocation of Fortune by Albina, along with her claims of possession of the island, do not merely "fit in" with the history that follows, but modify and are modified by the activities of the later kings and peoples that populate Britain.

The giants' role in the Anglo-Norman poem can also be seen to have historical implications. While it is true that the description of their conception by the devil or by "spirits of the air" (the incubi) taps into a discussion of otherworldly influence going back to Genesis, in this version of the story those questions do not seem relevant.²⁸ Brutus is not removing the primordial inhabitants of the island, since the giants have only been there for a short amount of time (260 years) before he arrives. Furthermore, as the title of the story suggests, the giants have a direct and lasting impact on the development of Britain's history at least equal to that of Albina and her sisters. First, the giants' demonic origins cast the

²⁷Brereton, *Des Grantz Geanz*, 323-330.

²⁸ The connections between the Giants of the Old Testament and the giants in medieval writing were commonly associated all throughout the medieval and early modern periods. Ruch, *Albina and her Sisters*, 48-53; W. Stephens, *Giants in Those Days: Folklore, Ancient History, and Nationalism*, (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1989), 65-96; J. Cohen, *Of Giants: Sex, Monsters, and the Middle Ages* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), 50-55. The commentaries of Augustine on Genesis would later be explicitly invoked in copies of the Latin *Bruts*, see below, Chapter 4, p. 165.

conquest of Britain by Brutus in an unquestionably positive light, as it corrects the evil embodied by the giants. He is, in addition, establishing order in an otherwise wild land (which he does by building cities and setting out laws). Since Albina and her sisters are Greek, it has also been suggested that Brutus is also replicating and reversing the outcome of the Trojan war by overcoming the giants or is re-enacting the divine punishment meted out to these “filii dei” in the form of the Flood.

In the Long Version of *Des Grantz Geanz*, the extra details that Brereton saw as literary embellishment also function to tie the giants in more closely with the historical narrative. In both, the giants leave traces of their presence in the form of ruined walls and caves, but the Long Version includes a passage that dwells on the giant bones that men may find all over England.²⁹ Even the coda that refers to the tale’s source in the giant Gogmagog, which Brereton saw as being at odds with the details of Geoffrey’s *Historia*, need not be interpreted this way. Brereton argued that the passage was removed because she interpreted the line “A qi la vie Brut dona” (to whom Brutus gave his life, i.e. spared him) as precluding the wrestling match with Corineus.³⁰ However, this coda does not say that Brutus spares Gogmagog indefinitely, but because he marveled at his size and wished to know where he came from. All of the versions of the *Brut* contain some reference to Gogmagog’s stature, but most do it in conjunction with the wrestling match. Furthermore, within the coda there are at least as many details that reference Geoffrey’s narrative as contrast with it. The addition attempts to reconcile the multiplication of the giants (from each of the sisters) with the detail from Geoffrey and Wace that only twenty-one attack the Britons, by stating that

²⁹ *Des Grantz Geanz*, 443-456. Ruch, *Albina and Her Sisters*, 67. Her translation of this passage is inaccurate, and appears to conflate the “ruined walls” at the end of the poem with the debate over whether or not giants existed, which is itself a literary technique consonant with Wace’s poetry.

³⁰ Brereton, *Des Grantz Geanz*, xiii and 53n, cf. *HRB I*: 475-489.

the giants kill each other off out of hatred, limiting their numbers to twenty-four. Where in most other renditions, the giants dwell in the island at their will, in the Long Version of *Des Grantz Geanz* they inherit the violent and unruly nature of their parents. Both the physical and temperamental legacies of the giants remain to influence the history of Brutus and the kings that come after him.

One further aspect of *Des Grantz Geanz* is worth mentioning in connection with the text's historical import. The dates that bracket the Albina narrative provide a means by which the story could be mapped onto the history of other peoples (most notably the Britons) or the history of mankind since the creation of the world. All of the poetic versions of the text, as well as many of the short Latin versions, have this feature, which has passed without much comment by any of the scholars who have studied the work. More significantly, they also provide a date for Brutus' arrival on the island, a feature not included in the histories of Geoffrey or Wace. By introducing specific years into the narrative, the Albina story augmented the early history of the Britons found in the *Historia Regum Britanniae* and many of its vernacular adaptations. The earlier texts measured time in genealogical terms, giving parallels to events outside Britain's borders in less specific terms such as "at this time," or "about this time."³¹ These explicit chronological tags were more characteristic of the universal histories of monastic houses than they were of the vernacular translations of Geoffrey of Monmouth, or of the courtly romance tradition with which *Des Grantz Geanz* has been associated.

³¹ For example, after the foundation of London, the *Historia* states "At that time the priest Eli was ruling in Judea and the Ark of the Covenant had been captured by the Philistines. The sons of Hector were ruling at Troy after the descendants of Antenor were exiled. In Italy there ruled the third of the Latins, Silvius Aeneas, the son of Aeneas and the uncle of Brutus." (*HRB* I: 506-9)

The dates given in the Anglo-Norman and Latin versions of the Albina story are fairly consistent with some of the most popular and well-regarded chronological reckoning of the times. The date of Brutus' arrival in Britain was estimated by Marianus Scotus to be around 1100 BC, and Ranulph Higden's calculations in the *Polychronicon* put the date between 1168 and 1104 BC.³² Thus, it is possible that both these versions of the Albina story were composed with some reference to universal chronology and could have been reconciled with the chronicles that they sometimes shared space with in Latin manuscripts. In the years that followed, additional vernacular versions of the *Brut*, as well as Latin versions translated from the history, would show the influences of universal history and chronology as a means of evaluating their accuracy.

The confluence of textual and material evidence, therefore, suggests that the Albina story owed its genesis as much to historical as to romance influences. Yet, even if we better understand the sources out of which the story arose, that evidence alone is insufficient to answer the question of why so many versions of the story emerged, nearly simultaneously, during Edward III's minority and during the first decades of his reign. What effects did the introduction of a proud, treacherous, and murderous group of women have on the history of Britain?

Examining Albina's place within the history of Britain/England within these early chronicles shows that Albina's story was not intended to be viewed as an isolated addition.³³

³² Higden's account places the fall of Troy 432 years before the foundation of Rome, and gives a period of 707 years from the foundation of the city to the time of Julius Caesar (100-44 BC). He also asserts that Brutus arrived in England 43 years after the fall of Troy. *Polychronicon*, vol. 2, p. 143 It is worth noting the striking difference in emphasis placed on exact chronology in works such as this one, even if the reconciliation of exact dates proved an impossible goal. Higden spent chapters, for example, trying to account for differences in the computation of the world's ages. (idem, vol. I., pp. 35-41)

³³ I agree with Jaclyn Rajsic that the Albina story more closely approximates an "explanatory myth" than an actual foundation. J. Rajsic, "Britain and Albion in the Mythical Histories of Medieval England" (Unpublished PhD Dissertation, University of Oxford, 2013), 165-67. While not necessary for the succession

As the Anglo-Norman and, later, the Middle English Prose *Bruts* came to include the Albina narrative, it became an integrated part of that tradition both in its theme as well as its content. Viewed in its immediate historical context, the Albina story casts the doubts about power and succession inherent in Britain's ancient history in a specifically female light. It allowed present tensions of succession and usurpation to be worked out in the distant past. While Isabella still lived, there were few other options. As such, the historical adaptations of Albina, even as a wholly negative figure, can offer a valuable glimpse into the tensions and ambiguities of Edward III's early reign. Likewise, the issue of Britain's territory could be reaffirmed by tying the history of Albion to that of Britain.

III. Albina in England's History

Adaptations of the Albina story soon appeared in other languages, and in prose as well as in poetry. The earliest exempla of a Latin text called *De origine gigantum* are contemporaneous with those of the *Grantȝ Geanȝ*. Two contemporary versions in Middle English also exist, one in the lengthy adaptation known as *Castleford's Chronicle*, composed in northern England around 1327, and one in the Auchinleck Manuscript (National Library of Scotland Advocates MS 19.2.1), a large compendium of literature produced in London around the 1330s. While I divide them by language here, I wish to emphasize that the various versions of the Albina story do not fall neatly into any patterns based on the language or content of any particular story. My aim is not to unify or schematize the tradition, but to illustrate how creative and versatile the origins of Britain continued to be as

of English kingship, I do suggest that the narrative implications of the Albina story were preserved and modified by later authors, notably John Hardyng. See below, pp. 108-11.

a wide variety of historians created their own vision of the island's past, recombining elements of both the Brutus and Albina legends to suit their own purposes.

I. Anglo-Norman

The two separate versions of the Albina story attached to the Anglo-Norman Prose *Brut* Chronicle have been masterfully analyzed by Julia Marvin, as part of her ongoing work on the text.³⁴ The Anglo-Norman *Brut* was a prose rendition of the history of Geoffrey of Monmouth and of Wace, drawing on other thirteenth and fourteenth century chronicles. Its oldest versions, which date approximately from the end of the thirteenth century, extended the narrative to the end of Henry III's reign in 1272, and a second continuation produced during Edward II's reign brought the text to 1307.³⁵ The Albina story did not become part of the narrative until two separate accounts of events from 1307-1332/3 had been added, in what became known as the Short and Long Versions of the chronicle.³⁶ As Marvin shows, however, the near-contemporary continuations are not the only variant elements of these works. Both the Short and the Long Versions contain different renditions of Albina's arrival in Britain, and these accounts provide a frame for the later narrative.

In the Short Version, Albina's story is still copied in verse and employs a simpler narrative of female transgression and male punishment. On account of her father's high status, Albina wishes to be subject to no man, and she convinces her sisters to live independently along with her by killing their husbands. As in *Des Grantz Geantz*, the plot is

³⁴ J. Marvin, "Albine and Isabelle: Regicidal Queens and the Historical Imagination of the Anglo-Norman Prose *Brut* Chronicles," *Arthurian Literature* 18 (2001): 143-192.

³⁵ Marvin, *Oldest*, 47-52.

³⁶ The Albina story in the Short Version is the verse *Des Grantz Geantz*, linked by a short verse. See H. Pagan ed. *Prose Brut to 1332* (Manchester, UK: Anglo-Norman Text Society, 2011), pp. 5-10. The later content of the Short Version is much different from the Long Version, which remains to be edited, and is thought to have predated it. See also R. Dean, *Anglo Norman Literature: A Guide to Texts and Manuscripts* (London: Anglo-Norman Text Society, 1999), 31-33.

undone by the youngest sister, and the wrathful king looks to punish his disobedient daughters with death. This time, however, the sisters are spared by the status of their husbands and father, rather than their own royal blood.³⁷ When the sisters arrive in Britain, Albina names the land by virtue of her being the first one to set foot on it, and soon afterward the women's carnal desires are satisfied not only by the devil but also by the giants, who engage in incestuous relationships with their mothers. While the text does present the possibility of female uprising, Marvin comments that "[t]he women's attempt at self-government has literally monstrous consequences. The headship of husband over even the most nobly-born wife is reasserted."³⁸

The Long Version, by contrast, adapts the Albina narrative into prose. It sets the story in Syria and names the king Diodicias,³⁹ an introduction which parallels the description of Aeneas in the following chapter.⁴⁰ Diodicias marries his daughters at a feast which he has held for all the kings of his conquered domains. The sisters become obstinate and spiteful of their husbands' low status, a trait that resists the husbands' attempts to correct it: first with gifts and warnings, and then with physical violence.⁴¹ The beatings have no effect on the sisters' morale, and eventually the husbands complain to Diodicias, their lord, who calls his daughters to him and chastises them as their father. Embarrassed, Albina counsels her sisters to murder their husbands as they sleep that night, which they do, and as a result are exiled.

³⁷ Marvin, "Albine and Isabelle," 147. The outline of this version appears to follow the short version of *Des Grantz Geanz* and, by association, the Latin *De origine Gigantum*, below, pp. 93-98.

³⁸ *ibid.*, 148.

³⁹ This may be an orthographic error on the part of the copyist, who read the "cl" in "Dioclician" for a d. See below, pg. xx

⁴⁰ Marvin, "Albine and Isabelle," 158. The "Syrian" texts constitute a separate version of the Albina story. See Ruch, *Albina and her Sisters*, 72-79. While the difference between Greece and Syria is seen as inconsequential, the Syrian (Assyrian) kingdom was said to be older than the Greek one, and may explain the choice. *Polychronicon*, vol. II, 259.

⁴¹ "Consequently the thirty-three kings beat their wives at one time or another, for they expected that in the face of this violence they would mend their ways. But their disposition was such that with courteous warnings they only behaved themselves worse, and with beatings worse still." Marvin, "Albine and Isabelle," 160.

The sisters arrive on the island without the delay of a stormy journey found in other accounts. They establish themselves and, although they give birth to giants, the prose version does not dwell on the monstrous consequences of the daughters' actions or mention incest. Marvin convincingly demonstrates that this change in the narrative is consistent with the Long Version's treatment of Edward II's deposition by his wife, Isabella of France, and her favorite, Roger Mortimer.⁴² She likens the treatment of Albina, whose crime becomes more severe (not attempted treachery, but actual murder) to that of Isabella. While not explicitly accused of the murder of Edward II in the Long Version, the text implies her complicity with Mortimer throughout Edward III's minority.⁴³ The portrayal of Isabella in the Long Version thus stands in particularly stark contrast to the treatment in the earlier, Short Versions of the Anglo-Norman *Brut*, where Isabella and her son are cast, along with the citizens of London, as remedying the ills inflicted by Edward II's reign.⁴⁴

Marvin is certainly correct in identifying the Long Version of the Anglo-Norman *Brut* as a coherent text that employs legendary as well as contemporary history to dramatic effect, and she too suggests that Albina's inclusion serves a greater purpose than as a simple allegory for Isabelle.⁴⁵ A short example from the Oldest Anglo-Norman *Brut* may further illustrate her point. The early history of Britain contains two other notably deceptive queens, Estrilde, the mistress of Brutus' son Lochrine, and Idon, who murders her own son, Porrex, after he kills his brother. Even before the inclusion of Albina, the Anglo-Norman *Brut* had

⁴² *ibid.* 171-173. The earliest manuscripts of the Long Version date from the mid-fourteenth century. Dean, *Anglo-Norman Literature*, 32-33.

⁴³ Marvin points out that this situation paralleled the fate of Isabella, who was never accused by Edward III of the crime. "Albine and Isabelle," 173

⁴⁴ Pagan, *Prose Brut to 1332*, 191-2.

⁴⁵ "Although I consider the introduction of these parallel murders deliberate, I do not wish to argue that the prologue of the later version serves as some kind of veiled representation or allegory of the fall of Edward II. Instead, I would say that the ancient story is made to serve as a precedent, an explanation, and even an optimistic reading of the present one." Marvin, "Albine and Isabelle," 173.

inflected these characters in a more negative tone than either Geoffrey or Wace. They portray Estrilte as a false peacemaker and Idon as not only murderous, but also sadistic by calling attention to the role her handmaidens played in the torture and murder of her son.⁴⁶

It is also worth noting that the pride exhibited by Albina is not confined to female figures. The Long Version of the *Brut* draws out its criticism of Isabelle and Mortimer over several chapters, one which paints Mortimer's treachery in specifically Arthurian terms.⁴⁷ Mortimer's downfall is specifically attributed to his overbearing pride. Aside from the more common illustrations of sumptuous dress and manner, the *Brut* states that Mortimer "counterfeited þe maner & doying of Kyng Arthure3 table; but openly he failede."⁴⁸ The chapter then goes on to enumerate Arthur's conquests, "as þe story of him more pleynloker (plainly) telleþ."⁴⁹ The compiler's choice of Arthur for this episode is interesting, not only as an ancient chivalric figure but also as reference to a contemporary monarch, since Arthur's pageantry had been so recently appropriated by Edward I.⁵⁰ The Anglo-Norman *Brut* thus calls attention to both a specific connection between an earlier point in time (its narrative of Arthur's conquests) and a practice of kingship that would continue to gain ground in England under Edward III. Mortimer deserves censure not simply as a proud and ostentatious knight. He is depicted as openly appropriating the place of the king, confirming the *Brut's* judgment that "his pride should nought long endure."⁵¹

⁴⁶ Marvin, *Oldest*, 85 and 95-97, and see the discussion of *Castleford's Chronicle* below, pp. 99-107.

⁴⁷ The Short Version of the Anglo-Norman *Brut* does not contain these chapters, providing instead a shortened account of Edward II's reign that credits Isabella and Edward III with destroying his evil counsel, and does not mention Mortimer at all in the context of the fighting or of Edward's deposition. Pagan, *Prose Brut to 1322*, 185-93.

⁴⁸ Brie, *The Brut*, 262. Citations here are from the Middle English as the Long version is not edited.

⁴⁹ *ibid.*

⁵⁰ Loomis, "Arthurian Enthusiast," 115-19 and see below, Chapter 3, pp. 119-21.

⁵¹ Brie, *The Brut*, 262.

It is likely, then, that the Long Version compiler was taking cues in his composition not only from his understanding of current events, but also from his understanding of the power the early narrative of the *Brut* could offer his continuation. Furthermore, the adaptation of the text of existing or continued chronicles, which Marvin finds so striking in the Anglo-Norman *Brut*, was not confined to the compiler of the *Brut* nor to Anglo-Norman texts. Indeed, the outline of this story may have been traced before in a Middle English poem now known as *Castleford's Chronicle*.⁵² The various political and moral implications of the Albina story, as well as its resonances with other elements of the *Brut*, become even more pronounced when the versions in different languages are taken into account.

II. Latin

Reduced prose versions of the Albina narrative began to appear in Latin around the same time as the Anglo-Norman versions were compiled. These texts were often bound together with copies of Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae* and other miscellaneous historical works.⁵³ Within these compilations, Albina's story is often directly attached to Brutus', and the title of the Latin work, *De origine gigantum*, took its name from the short heading that directly preceded the text in many manuscripts.⁵⁴ As with the Anglo-

⁵² Marvin seems not to have noticed this at the time of publication of her article. Neither did Anke Bernal, who actually wrote about the Albina Story in the context of *Des Grantz Geanz* and *Castleford's Chronicle*. Lisa Ruch notes the dating of Castleford's chronicle, but she offers no further insight into its originality other than a brief comment on the compiler's other Latin sources (*Albina and her Sisters*, 75-77). The dating of *Castleford's Chronicle* is unknown, but it is plausible that the same story or story type was adapted into both verse and into prose.

⁵³ The earliest surviving copies of *De origine gigantum* date from the late 1330s. Carley and Crick, "Constructing Albion's Past," 375-83.

⁵⁴ An English translation is available in R. Evans, "Gigantic Origins: An Annotated Translation of *De Origine Gigantum*," in Carley ed., *Glastonbury Abbey*, 419-434.

Norman, the Latin *De origine gigantum* also represented a shortening of the text of *Des Grantz Geanz*, as well as a selective reworking of the narrative.⁵⁵

The Latin text follows the general contours of a shortened Anglo-Norman version of *Des Grantz Geanz*, and one which condenses some of the drama at the beginning of the narrative. Where both Anglo-Norman versions of the poem tend to repeat details of dramatic moments, the Latin text provides a direct and largely impersonal narrative. Thus, instead of Albina appealing to her sisters in direct speech, both the Anglo-Norman abbreviation and the Latin *De origine gigantum* present a straightforward narrative of events leading up to the sisters' exile. Once the plot is discovered, the sisters are judged by (and saved by) the honor of their husbands rather than their own elite status. In their examination of the Latin versions of the Albina story, James P. Carley and Julia Crick point to the Latin translators' tendency to abbreviate detail and remove direct speech as evidence that the compiler of the *De origine gigantum* was "attempt[ing] to write a vernacular narrative as serious history."⁵⁶

The compiler's editorial decisions call attention to three specific moments in the text where the Latin is strikingly more elegant or expressive. They all three occur following the sisters' exile and arrival in Britain. While the Anglo-Norman text describes the pains of their voyage and the perils of the women on the sea, the *De origine* tells its audience

there was not anyone who had pity on their grief on account of the barbarity of the unlawful act detected in them. They were made to feel sorry for their

⁵⁵ As with the Anglo-Norman and other vernacular versions of the Albina story, the Latin versions of the story have a varied and convoluted history. Even shorter redactions of the story became part of the longer Latin histories known collectively as the Latin *Bruts*, which will be discussed in the next chapter.

⁵⁶ Carley and Crick, "Constructing Albion's Past," 358.

tricks, but they themselves were not to be grieved over with any compassion
(*de dolosis dolorosa sunt facte nec ulla tamen miseracione dolende*).⁵⁷

The compiler uses repetition, of words rather than deeds, to moralize and to support the judgment of the king and his sons-in-law.

The compiler's second intervention comes after the sisters arrive on the island after their treacherous trip. After satisfying their hunger, they set about exploring, but they find no inhabitants.⁵⁸ In the Anglo-Norman poem, the exploration of the island is a direct consequence of the search for other inhabitants, but in the *De origine gigantum*, the sisters explore the land and catalogue its bounty in the same manner as Brutus will do after he defeats the giants in the *Historia Regum Britanniae*. Albina then gives a speech to her sisters, the only time direct speech is employed in the *De origine*, worth recounting at length.

On account of our defects we have lost our native land and reputation, and we have been made exiles, and the hope of their return to us is utterly gone. Therefore since we are now so fortunate and Fortune has given us this land, it is right that I should be first of all of you in it and that the lordship of it should be mine of right, because in disembarking first from the ship I took seisin of it.⁵⁹

Albina and her sisters, it seems, have acknowledged and atoned for their wickedness as a result of the sea voyage, and along with the admission of their guilt comes a claim to the territory they have found. Her sisters concur and bestow the name of Albion on the island. In highlighting the role that Fortune plays in the sisters' standing, the compiler opens up the possibility that Fortune will not always be so kind—and his third intervention immediately shows this to be the case.

⁵⁷ Evans, "Gigantic Origins," 421.

⁵⁸ *De origine gigantum* 74-75: *perambulauerunt terram in longum et latum et neminem invenerunt in ea*. Evans, "Gigantic Origins," 421: "they wandered the length and breadth of the land and found no-one in it."

⁵⁹ *De origine gigantum* 82-87; Evans, "Gigantic Origins," 88-94.

After the women have been seduced by the incubi and the giants are reproducing incestuously on the island, the *De origine gigantum* explains that just as the giants become more horribly large and strong so too do the women become horribly fat. The entire episode is summed up with an explicit moral statement: “And it was fitting that horror should be born of horror and monsters should give birth to monsters.”⁶⁰ The women are never reformed or redeemed, nor were they particularly fortunate. The giants are destined to people the island and leave lasting traces of their habitation in the form of destroyed walls and ditches that outlast the name of Albion itself.⁶¹

By compressing the story, the author of the *De origine gigantum* has not dulled the narrative but recombined it with the history that it was supposed to complement. The unrepentant sisters and their gigantic offspring are the first casualties of Fortune’s wheel in the history that is about to unfold. Read apart from the *Historia*, however, the narrative trajectory of the Albina story could complement Wace as much as it could Geoffrey’s original Latin. Like the women, the Britons are punished for their sins with the loss of their land, and outside of Geoffrey’s *Historia*, there is no intimation that Arthur’s prophetic return would save them. This would be especially emphatic if, as is thought, the early manuscripts of the *De origine* both may have originated from Glastonbury Abbey, where the bones of the famous British king had twice been exhumed by English monarchs, and had been recently visited by Edward III.⁶²

The early connections with Glastonbury, and the monastery’s source as the fount of Arthurian and other legendary history in the Middle Ages, was partially what led Carley and

⁶⁰ *De origine gigantum* 110-12: *Apertumque fuit ut ex horridis horridi nascerentur et belue beluas propagarent.*

⁶¹ *De origine gigantum* 113-16. These walls may have a parallel to the description of giant bones contained in the Long version of *Des Granz Geantz* (443-456). See above, p. 85.

⁶² Carley and Crick, “Constructing Albion’s Past,” 365-72.

Crick to conclude that the historicizing of the Albina story was due to the conflict between England and Scotland. In testament to their thorough material and textual study of the Latin versions, subsequent analyses of the Albina story which mention politics have, for the most part, focused on this context to the exclusion of all others, or accepted it as a foregone conclusion. Albina, in this line of thinking, offered an even earlier “foundation” for the island, or at least a guarantee that one person had taken possession of all of it while it was uninhabited, and the presence of another ancient female founder (Scota) led to her being taken from the legendary tradition and pressed into the service of English history. The legendary origins of the British and the Scots did develop antagonistically over the course of the fourteenth century and into the fifteenth, as we shall see, but there are good reasons not to take this as a given in the early years of Edward III’s reign.

First, Albina does not seem to offer a conclusive counter to the Scottish claims of independence or to the legend of Scota. While the antiquity of the Scottish nation became the focus of later Scottish histories, the version of the legend that appeared in Scotland’s petition to Pope Boniface IX in 1301, as well as in the Declaration of Arbroath (1320), do not argue that the Scots are more ancient than the Britons.⁶³ In fact, both versions seek to integrate themselves within the framework of Geoffrey’s early British history while refuting its openly territorial claims. In 1301, the Scottish claim asserted that Scota arrived during the time of Brutus’ sons, settled in the territory governed by Albanact, and eventually drove the Britons from it, at which point Scotland became a separate kingdom, enjoying different customs, language, and a hostile attitude to the British, whom they would eventually expel

⁶³ Stones, *Anglo-Scottish Relations*, 194-97.

from the island with the help of the Picts.⁶⁴ Twenty years later, the Declaration of Arbroath asserted that the Scots had driven both the Picts and the Britons from the northern parts of Albion, which they had since inhabited in one unbroken line.⁶⁵

While both of these documents reference the ancient origins of the Scots, in neither is antiquity the basis for possession of the territory. Rather, it is the presentation of the Scots as a unified and distinct race who took their land by conquest, and (especially in the Declaration of Arbroath) could trace their ancestry directly back to the first founders of their race. These founders, like the Trojan ancestors of the Britons and the Normans discussed in the last chapter, were also unvanquished in battle. Thus, while Albina's gender may have rendered her as a parallel to Scota, little about her invocation would directly help the English cause. Even though her perambulations of the island ensured that the entirety of it was uninhabited, this would do little to deny the eventual Scottish conquest of their territory, let alone the many conquests of Britain that had taken place since.⁶⁶ Therefore, the image of a treasonous and insubordinate woman should not only be examined with an eye to the political context of Scotland, but rather with attention to important resonances within the history of Britain.

⁶⁴ Stones, *Anglo-Scottish Relations*, 227. Geoffrey had contended that the Picts had first arrived in Scotland slightly before the Incarnation and, although defeated by the British king Marius, were given uninhabited northern territories to live in and took wives from the Irish, who had arrived from Spain, *HRB IV*: 372-388.

⁶⁵ R. J. Goldstein, *The Matter of Scotland: Historical Narrative in Medieval Scotland* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1993), 87-94.

⁶⁶ Later versions of the Scota narrative, notably those put forth by John of Fordun and (in the fifteenth century) William Bower, suggest that Geoffrey's division of Albion among Brutus' sons had not accounted for the far northern regions, which remained uninhabited until the Scots arrived from Ireland. Ruch's discussion of Albina's political implications uses one of these later versions, and is particularly anachronistic in this respect. *Albina and Her Sisters*, 110-113.

III. Middle English

Evidence of how different the Albina narratives could be is given by the first two rhymed chronicles in Middle English that make use of the story. The first and, potentially, the earliest of the two, *Castelford's Chronicle* was a lengthy rendition and continuation of the Brutus story up to 1327.⁶⁷ *Castelford's Chronicle* consists of nearly 40,000 lines of poetry, of which the Albina story occupies the first 226 lines and is separated from the Brutus narrative by a heading "Here ends the Prolog Olbyon, which was an Isle al wylsome (obstinate)."⁶⁸ While the women's participation in the narrative does not extend far beyond their temporary naming of the territory that Brutus conquers, this obstinacy persists throughout the text as part of the inherent character of Britain, to be reflected in later (particularly female) figures.

Within the Albina narrative, the chronicler removes many of the speeches between Albina and her sisters, most notably the passage where Albina complains of the lower estate of her husband. By silencing Albina at this key moment, the chronicler inserts his own motivations for the story. Albina, he says, becomes prideful, and pride motivates her decision not to be subject to her husband. After the sisters are banished from their homeland and arrive on the island of Albion, the narrator describes their exploration of the island, but he is emphatic that they live on the island without changing its natural state. They do not build cities or till the soil, and neither do their monstrous progeny. They forage for their food and take the bounty of the island for their support. This aspect of the story is touched upon in *Des Grantz Geanz*, but the author of the Long Version attributes the

⁶⁷ *Castelford's Chronicle, or The Boke of Brut*, ed. C. Ekhardt, 2 vols., *EETS* OS 305 & 306 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996). Hereafter *CC*. While the text is thought to be contemporary, the sole surviving manuscript dates from the fifteenth century. See C. Eckhardt, "The Manuscript of *Castelford's Chronicle*: Its History and Its Scribes," in *The Prose Brut and other Medieval Chronicles: Books Have their Histories*, ed. J. Rajsic, D. Hoche, and E. Kooper (Woodbridge: York Medieval Press, 2016), 199-217.

⁶⁸ *CC* 227-8. The Middle English Dictionary offers "obstinate, headstrong" for wylsome.

women's hunting skills to their high status.⁶⁹ The compiler of *Castleford's Chronicle*, we shall see, uses the land as a bridge to connect the Albina narrative to the rest of the history, but in doing so he also minimizes Albina's impact on the island. Although it bears her name and the giants that she and her sisters engendered on it, the island is otherwise "all wyldernesse."⁷⁰

The narrator sets the story not in Greece but in Syria, where Albina and her sisters are the daughters of the emperor Diocletian. Since so few early witnesses of the Anglo-Norman versions survive, it is difficult to say whether this modification signaled a competing version of the story with its own plot structure or whether the changes that the compiler made to the narrative were of his own devising. The adaptation of Geoffrey and Wace in *Castleford's Chronicle*, however, indicates that the compiler freely mixed parts of those and other histories into his own.⁷¹

As the compiler of *Castleford's Chronicle* begins the Brutus narrative, he offers another prologue to the work, this one drawn more directly from the Latin tradition of Geoffrey of Monmouth than the Anglo-Norman of Wace. He describes the geographical features of Britain, following and expanding upon the material in Book I of the *Historia Regum Britanniae*. After describing the cities, rivers, and resources of the island, he finishes the short preface with the notice that five peoples now inhabit England: the Normans, Picts, Saxons, Britons, and Scots. He notes that the Britons used to enjoy dominion over all of it, until their pride

⁶⁹ The passage in *Des Grantz Geanz*, which begins on 365-66 with the couplet "assez savoient de chacer / quant avoient liege poer (they knew enough about hunting / from when they had liege power" and continues for another 32 lines (to 398) is reduced to four in *Castleford's Chronicle*: and when dyspendit was their vytyl / wyth herbes and frutes þai fed þam all / and lyfyd as they myght do best / and toke þe flech of dyuers best (beast)." CC: 198-202.

⁷⁰ CC: 181.

⁷¹ See, for example, his embellishment of St. Ursula's pilgrimage to Rome below, chapter 3, pp. 135-36.

caused God to punish them.⁷² Both the land and the pride attached to its early inhabitants (the isle all wylsome) tie Albina into the narrative of Britain's early kings.

In addition to another narrative of foundation, however, the legendary history of Britain's first kings also contains a multitude of examples of good and bad female governance, and it is within this context that we should look for Albina's impact on the narrative. While it is right to suggest that the inversion of power caused by a female ruler could be more than a mistake to be corrected by the rightful male king, Albina's place in the historical narrative of England is less nuanced than some of the other prominent female figures within the early history of England.

The succession of Britain's first kings offers some notable examples of unruly women. Albina fits in with the regicidal queen Idon who murders her son Porrex after he kills his own brother to take the throne. *Castleford's Chronicle* amplifies this scene, saying that rather than simply murdering her son in his sleep, Idon and her ladies in waiting break into Porrex's chamber and torture him at his mother's command.⁷³ Albina also has echoes of the (usually foreign) women whose lechery leads to the undoing of the Britons: Ronwenne, the daughter of Hengist, Guenevere, and Estrilde, whose affair with Brut's son Lochrine causes the first internal dispute among the Britons.

Set against these figures, however, are several exemplary female rulers: Lochrine's wife Guentholyn, who raises Cornwall against her husband and his mistress and Lear's loyal daughter, Cordelia, who helps her father recover his kingdom and eventually rules it

⁷² CC: 319-34, compare HRB I: 24-47.

⁷³ CC 4255-56, "They mortherd hym in swylk torment / and all þorowe hys moders assent." This detail surpasses the emphasis given to Idon in the Anglo-Norman *Brut* which, while it states that Idon and her handmaidens murder the king, removes any evidence of torture. See Marvin, *Oldest*, 95.

herself.⁷⁴ Finally, Tonwenne, the mother of Brenne and Belin, plays a key role in preventing civil war to flare up once more in Britain, and unites her sons in love and conquest. In Geoffrey's history as well as its translations, these complex and powerful figures play a key role in shaping Britain's legendary past.

The compiler of *Castleford's Chronicle* uses these early moments to emphasize proper governance. When Locrine first encounters Estrilde and promises to marry her instead of Gwendolyn, Gwendolyn's enraged father, Corineus, bursts into the king's chamber and threatens Locrine with death. Though Corineus' speech follows Geoffrey's Latin text closely, the compiler embellishes Corineus' threats in direct speech, bringing the episode more in line with Wace's dramatic rendition.⁷⁵ In both, however, Corineus' complaint is clear – Locrine is behaving unwisely in breaking his promise, both because of Corineus' faithful service to Brutus, and also because he is bringing in a foreign woman as his queen.⁷⁶ Later in the episode, when Gwendolyn defeats Locrine and takes control of Britain, the compiler adapts his description of Gwendolyn's fierce nature from Geoffrey's "paternia insania furens" (inheriting the fury of her father) to "Thorough father's kind cruell was scho (she) / Her willys austerly to do."⁷⁷ Gwendolyn inherits not her father's rage, but his severity. She drowns Locrine's mistress and daughter, Severn, since she reminds her of her husband's misdeeds.⁷⁸ Gwendolyn may be a harsh ruler, but she listens to the counsel of her advisers and accords that with her will. She honors her husband's child by naming the river Severn

⁷⁴ HRB II 260-70; *Roman de Brut*, 2052-67. In Geoffrey's narrative, as well as the Middle English *Brut*, Cordelia is said to have been driven to suicide by her nephews, since they resented having a woman rule the land. Wace relates her suicide as a "foolish act."

⁷⁵ HRB II: 32-36. "saying this over and over again, [Corineus] raised his axe as if to strike [Locrine] (*hoc iterum iterumque proclamans, librabat bipennem quasi percussus eum*)."*Roman de Brut* 1341-76. Corineus threatens Locrine's life as part of his speech. *Castleford's Chronicle* repeats the threats twice at the end. "lowe vengeance now, syn I þe fynd / in wylls to me to be unkynd." CC 2711-44.

⁷⁶ CC 2741-44.

⁷⁷ CC 2849-50: "Through her father's blood fierce was she / and did her will with austerly." I translate "cruell" as fierce (or severe) in keeping with Corineus' description in the rest of *Castleford's Chronicle*.

⁷⁸ CC 2849-50; c.f. HRB II: 58.

after her. Gwendolyn is motivated not by pride, like Albina, but by kinship, and she restores Locrine's heir (her son Madan, who has grown up in Cornwall under Corineus' supervision) to the throne, thereby preserving the line of British kings against foreign corruption.

When the chronicle turns to Lear and his three daughters, the compiler embellishes the speeches of all the women, but he pays special attention to Cordelia's actions. In the *Historia Regum Britanniae* the speech she gives to her father centers on his worth: in contrast to the flattery of her two elder sisters, she claims that no daughter should claim to love a father more than befits his role as a parent. The summation of her speech in the *HRB*, "you are worth what you have, and that much I love you," became a refrain in Wace's *Roman de Brut* (tant as, tant vals et j'o tant t'aim).⁷⁹ In *Castleford's Chronicle*, the same refrain is repeated three times in succession:

And so, my fadyr, wythoutyn let
To þine asking ending þowe sett
Aftyr þowe hafes and ek mon fortht
So mykyll in lof, fadyr, ert thou wortht
In þat þowe hafes and aftyr þou is
So fadyr, I lofe þe and no lese
After þou hafes and after þou ert
So forth I lof þe in my hert

and so, my father, without further delay
to answer your request I say
For what you have and may have forth
So much in love, father, are you worth
In what you have and what you are
That much father, I love you and no less
After what you have and who you are
So forth I love you in my heart⁸⁰

Following his expulsion from the land, Lear recognizes the truth in Cordelia's speech, dwelling on the same refrain three times in a lengthy lament. As in the previous versions of the tale, Cordelia is instrumental in equipping Lear to win back his kingdom, and she rules it after his death. At this point, the first book of *Castleford's Chronicle* ends. This division of the

⁷⁹ *HRB II*: 161-2: quantum habes, tantum vales, tantumque te diligo., Wace, *Roman de Brut*, 1736-42. The extended passage in the *Roman de Brut* is as follows: "I don't know of any love greater than that between father and child or between mother and children. You are my father: I love you as much as I should love my father. And to leave you in no more doubt. You are worth as much as you possess and that much I love you."

⁸⁰ *CC* 3411-18.

British history is not found in Geoffrey of Monmouth or any of the vernacular verse chronicles that circulated before it. It is striking that this division brackets the early history of Britain between two very different women. Albina, whose disobedience to her father led to murder and exile, and Cordelia, whose deference to her father preserves the kingdom of Britain for both of them.⁸¹ Thus, Albina is made to fit within the parameters of the early history of Britain, but she does so less as an example of proper female agency than as its foil, and a placeholder for things to come.

Turning to later female figures, *Castelford's Chronicle* provides an interesting account of Stephen's reign and his conflict with Matilda, especially when compared with the Anglo-Norman *Brut*. After the death of Henry I, the compiler states that Matilda "had the reyne in wilde," implying total control, but also the lack thereof. Immediately, a Parliament is convened, where the barons pronounce her succession as unlawful, since she has no male heir, and call Stephen, Henry's cousin, to reign in her place as the closest male issue.⁸² The chronicle here ignores Stephen's older brother, Theobald, but this is merely the first of a number of modifications that the chronicler makes to contrast Stephen with Matilda.

Stephen appears as the model of a just and law-abiding ruler, as well as a "doughty knight," who quickly brings the rebellious Scots to heel. He gives the produce of his own hunting land to the poor of York.⁸³ Although the chronicler notes that his realm was never quiet due to some barons who remained faithful to Matilda, the coronation of Stephen is not in obvious violation of Henry's bequest and the barons' oath, but at the bidding of the realm

⁸¹ *Castelford's Chronicle* is also much more critical of Cordelia's deposition by her cousins. Where other chronicles merely state that she was put down (or killed) by them, *Castelford's Chronicle* contains the most negative rendition of the history, in which the cousins cruelly imprison her and torment her until she commits suicide. CC 3980-4029.

⁸² CC 33045-50 "Þei saide alle, Þoru regale custum / To Þe coron sulde na woman cum / Bot scho hade male engendrure, / Ðat of Þe kyngdum might ber cure."

⁸³ This northern interest runs through the entirety of the chronicle, and is pronounced in these chapters, where much of the chaos of Stephen's actual reign is taken up with accounts of Scottish raids in the North and the lives of holy men, particularly William, Archbishop of York.

of England. This stands in direct contrast to Matilda's behavior. Soon after Stephen establishes order, Matilda again appears to claim her heritage, this time with her infant son. Stephen again convenes a Parliament, which Matilda addresses directly. The chronicle notes that Stephen's respect for the law is so great, he is willing to abdicate in favor of Matilda and her heir, but asks the Parliament to render their judgment impartially.

The reply of the Parliament, rendered in direct speech, is as follows (translation mine).

alle saie we þus, and gifes for dome
 A kyng coroned anens þe point
 of Hali Kirk he es anoint;
 Nane erdelik man durande his life
 Of his kyngdum agh him to prife
 Qwen Godde him cessed, aftre his daie
 Þoru right to cum þan, quaso maie

We all say and give this for our doom
 A king crowned before the head⁸⁴
 Of Holy Church is anointed
 No other man during his [the king's] life
 Of his kingdom ought him to deprive
 When God ordained him. After his day
 Whoso through right to come then, may.⁸⁵

The Parliament's statement that no man can depose a sitting king would have presented readers with a sharp contrast to the Parliament that had deposed Edward II in favor of his son and handed the kingdom over to a woman. Still, the Parliament renders the same judgment as Stephen, Matilda's son Henry will reign after Stephen's death. Even this assurance does not satisfy Matilda, who reacts in an unreasonable and emotional manner. According to the chronicler, Matilda becomes distraught at the idea that Stephen should have her heritage, and she raises an army of foreigners (aliens) who invade and capture Stephen. Stephen remains in captivity for five months while chaos reigns in England, until Parliament again convenes and reaffirms their statement that Stephen should be king and that they cannot legally depose him, but that Henry will reign after. When Matilda rebels against this judgment once more, the entirety of England casts her out.⁸⁶

⁸⁴ I translate "point" for "pontiff," though the term could stand generally for representee, appointee.

⁸⁵ CC 33195-201

⁸⁶ CC 33306-7. "And qwen scho comun ordinains brak / Englandes strengþ putt her abak"

While Matilda does not garner outright scorn in *Castelford's Chronicle*, she appears as a rash and impetuous figure. Stephen's reign has almost none of the ambiguity that is relayed in the Anglo-Norman *Brut*. Instead, he is held up as the embodiment of the relationship between king and law: wise and good, the will of the people of England is his. When *Castelford's Chronicle* resumes its narrative of the reign, Stephen has died without issue and the inheritance passes to Henry. In a final modification, the chronicle states that Stephen remained celibate so as not to complicate the succession, a fact that would have come as a surprise to his son, Eustace.

The depiction of Stephen's reign, then, shows considerable effort on the part of the compiler of *Castelford's Chronicle* to moderate the character of Stephen. While much of the adaptation may have occurred with Isabella in mind, it also casts Matilda as an aggressive, perhaps reckless, woman desirous of power for herself, and thus, as part of a line of women that can be traced all the way back to Albina. By avoiding the question of succession and drawing attention to Parliament's role, the chronicler suggests that Matilda is distraught about losing her own status, rather than her son's, and that in raising rebellion she acts against the law and the will of England, rather than against Stephen. Like Albina, her fate is also decided by Parliament, although the decree of England's Parliament was more likely directed at contemporary circumstances.

Unfortunately, while *Castelford's Chronicle* appears to have been continued all the way up to 1327 and Isabella's invasion, the sole surviving manuscript lacks a considerable amount of text between the departure of Isabella for France and her arrival back in England at the head of an invading force. The queen does arrive at the head of an army of aliens, echoing Matilda's, and also perhaps the worries of the petitioners who urged Isabella to return to her husband. No mention is made of Roger Mortimer, but since so much of the

work is missing there is no way to know for sure whether Isabella was the prime actor in this episode. Nonetheless, the opinion of Matilda's Parliament offers suggestions as to the chronicler's opinion of her. *Castleford's Chronicle* and the Long Version of the Anglo-Norman *Brut* have very similar versions of the Albina story, and both were affected by the chronicler's understanding of the history of Britain contained in the *Brut*. The Albina story did not require one history to be a copy of the other, but rather allowed for a general pattern of governance to be established and maintained throughout the respective works.

The second surviving Middle English version of the Albina story to survive is found in the Auchinleck Manuscript, a collection of literary texts produced in London in the 1330s. This work, called the *Anonymous Short English Metrical Chronicle*, is a poem of some 2600 lines in rhyming couplets. Significantly shorter than *Castleford's Chronicle*, it contains a narrative of Britain's history from Albina to the beginning of Edward III's reign. The vast majority of the work is devoted to the pre-Saxon kings. The *Metrical Chronicle* purports to tell the story of the *Brut* to an English speaking audience.⁸⁷ The version of early English history presented in the *Metrical Chronicle* is radically different from that offered by *Castleford's Chronicle*, and the Albina narrative is a key site of this difference.

The Albina narrative in the *Metrical Chronicle* occupies the first 360 lines of the work, and it has much of the rhetorical detail found in the Anglo-Norman *Grantz Geanz*. Albina is the eldest daughter (of twenty) of an unnamed king of Greece, all of whom were given in good marriages to men of high honor.⁸⁸ This marriage does not suit Albina, who, under the influence of the devil, convinces her sisters to murder their husbands if they will not consent

⁸⁷ *Anonymous Short English Metrical Chronicle (ASEMC)*, 1-4 "Here may men rede whoso can / Hou Jnglond first bigan / Men mow it finde jn Engliche / As þe Brout it telleþ, ywis." All citations to the *Metrical Chronicle* refer to line numbers in the electronic edition of the Auchinleck MS, available through the National Library of Scotland. (<http://auchinleck.nls.uk/mss/smc.html>)

⁸⁸ *ASEMC*, 30-32 "Noiþer to king no to emperour / al thei were married well / als to swiche women bifel."

to be governed by them. Her behavior stands in stark contrast to the actions of her youngest sister, whose love of her young husband serves as a model for all good women.⁸⁹ This version of the story is at once more general, taking place in some heathen country, and more specific as to the relative merit of Albina's actions.⁹⁰

The section of the story devoted to the sisters' exile and discovery of Albion is relatively short in comparison to the first portion of the narrative. Unlike the narrative in *Castleford's Chronicle*, Albina does not cite any reason for naming the island, but simply says that she will do so, and that it will bear that name forevermore.⁹¹ The compiler of the *Metrical Chronicle* mentions the sisters' attempts to hunt and gather meat, but is even more emphatic that the island is untilled wilderness. After a short time, Albina is visited by the devil once again, who impregnates her and her sisters, engendering the giants who control the island until Brutus' arrival eight hundred years later. Brutus encounters the same untilled wilderness that Albina did, but he sets up cities and tills the soil to establish a true foundation and replace the name of Albion in favor of Britain. The narrative of Britain's early kings focuses almost exclusively on their role as builders and founders of cities, in opposition to the island's first inhabitants.

Not content with this coloring of Albina, the narrator of the *Metrical Chronicle* also removes the references to other female figures (and rulers) who were not explicitly treacherous. Gwendolyn receives no mention, and, conspicuously, neither does Cordelia. Lear gives his kingdom, along with one daughter, to a wicked man through his own foolish

⁸⁹ *ASEMC*, 115-118: "Hir lord þat was a ʒongling / Sche loued mest of al þing / Also schuld ich gode wiman - / Ac mani on so do no can." (Her lord, who was a youngling / she loved most of all things / Each good woman should as well / though many do not know one who does)

⁹⁰ I disagree with Anke Bernau's view that in the *Short Metrical Chronicle's* opening, "the romance commonplaces are piled so high that the effect is a curious mix of familiarity and meaninglessness." Bernau, "Beginning with Albina," 261.

⁹¹ *ASEMC*, 314-16.

counsel, and he later recovers it through the help of an unnamed king.⁹² Where the previous versions of Britain's early history seized upon these women as opportunities to present proper behavior or to highlight the poor behavior of Britain's male rulers, the compiler of the *Metrical Chronicle* passes over them in silence. These omissions alone would suffice to suggest that the compiler of the *Metrical Chronicle* was composing a narrative deliberately hostile to women, especially women in power. However, the compiler of the *Metrical Chronicle* also invents another wicked woman: a maiden of Spain named Inga, who occupies the treacherous positions of both Ronwenne, Vortigern's daughter, and Hengist in the earlier versions of Britain's history.

Inga's presence in the *Metrical Chronicle* is unprecedented, though necessary because the compiler had made Hengist into an early British king. The *Metrical Chronicle* places Hengist's reign after Belin's (who has bankrupted the country), and before king Lear's, and makes him instrumental in establishing Britain's status and dominance.⁹³ Not only is Hengist responsible for the foundation of cities all across England, Wales, Scotland, and Normandy, but he also shaped the country in new ways – by instituting Parliament, dividing England into shires and hundreds, standardizing weights and measures, and providing law and order to the inhabitants.⁹⁴ The process of taming the island of Albion, begun by Brutus, is continued and completed by Hengist in the *Metrical Chronicle*, which devotes more space to Hengist's rule than to any other British king, including Brutus and Arthur. Yet while Hengist is rehabilitated in this chronicle, the compiler makes it clear that the land doesn't take its name from him. That dubious honor is reserved for Inga, along with three treacherous acts

⁹² *ASEMC* 877-936. Lear's reign contains a long narrative of his wanderings, and his punishment of the steward who married his one daughter, so the omission of Cordelia represents a conscious choice of sources.

⁹³ *ASEMC* 655-876.

⁹⁴ *ASEMC* 675-95; The *Metrical Chronicle* also attributes the building of Stonehenge to Hengist, (715-23).

attributed to Hengist and Ronwenne in all other versions of Britain's origin narrative we have encountered thus far.

In the *Metrical Chronicle*, Inga comes to Britain in the time of king Aethelbert, arriving with a ship of warriors who have outgrown their native land. She addresses Aethelbert in French, promising gold and silver in exchange for a place to settle, and she asks the king for a territory no bigger than can be covered by a bull's hide.⁹⁵ Aethelbert grants this request and Inga builds Horncastle (Thongcaster). Later, she invites the king and his companions to a feast in the new castle, but immediately after greeting the king with the word "wassail," her men fall upon the unsuspecting guests and murder them. After the deed is done, she gives the country its enduring name, England, after her own.⁹⁶

Inga's story, thus, is not a simple grafting of a new name onto the existing history. Rather, the compiler of the *Metrical Chronicle* uses her to incorporate several characters from Britain's ancient past into one. From Hengist, she inherits the foundation of Thongcaster, as well as the treacherous murder of Britain's that he carries out in the *Historia*. In her gender, as well as her use of the term "wassail," she also fills the role of Hengist's daughter, Ronwenne, whose beauty leads Vortigern to give Hengist land in exchange for her hand in marriage. Finally, Inga's Spanish origin also recalls a race whose treachery was a leitmotif in the *Historia* as well as its vernacular translations: the Picts. In the *Metrical Chronicle*, then, Inga is a figure without precedent, but not without parallel. Her gender, character, and her naming of the island all make her into a ready extension of Albina.⁹⁷

⁹⁵ Both the episode here and in the *HRB*, where it is ascribed to Hengist, parallel the foundation of Carthage in *Aeneid* I:366-68.

⁹⁶ *ASEMC*, 1340-45.

⁹⁷ As the *ASEMC* relates Inga's voyage from Spain (1270-1302), he also calls attention to the suffering of Inga's companions due to hunger, and, like Albina, Inga's companions are doomed to die in Spain, not as punishment, but of starvation.

Inga's dominion, like Albina's, does not last for long. After murdering Aethelbert, she divides the realm into five kingdoms, which the *Metrical Chronicle* briefly describes before moving back to the Anglo-Saxon succession of monarchs. The dominion of Britain passes to the Normans and Plantagenets, ending with Edward III, whom the compiler prays will have the grace to rule well, as well as "him to venge in every place / Oȝeyns (against) his enemis þat it be."⁹⁸ Throughout the narrative, the compiler has taken pains to present a model of disruptive, treacherous womanhood, which continues unchecked by the presence of any worthy figures. The Albina story, then, aptly suits his vision of England, as well as his overly pessimistic assessment of the role of women in the country's development. In light of this, it seems likely that when the compiler prays that the young Edward III will be revenged on his enemies at the end of the *Metrical Chronicle*, it is possible that he has one very recent enemy in mind: Edward's mother, Isabella of France.

Thus, at least for these early adapters of the Albina story, the debate over England's claims to Scotland appears to be either of equal or secondary importance to the political upheaval that marked the transition between Edward II and his son. Rather, the instabilities and tensions presented by Albina's infamy allowed these early chroniclers to re-orient the narrative of Britain's first kings toward issues of succession and evil counsel. Those elements, in turn, may have been influenced by the historical writing of the preceding decades, as even the most fantastic renditions of the Albina story contain such historical features as dates and etymological claims to territory that facilitate the story's inclusion or comparison with Britain's early history.

The early manuscript history of the Albina story, convoluted and confusing as it is, permits at least two further observations. First, there was clearly no one "ur-text" of the

⁹⁸ ASEMC 2357-8.

story, even within specific genres and languages. Although the Anglo-Norman version in Cotton Cleopatra D.ix is usually referred to as the oldest and certainly the most detailed narrative, the separate and quite distinct poetic version in *Castelford's Chronicle* may have predated it. The other redactions in various languages existed simultaneously, appearing in force in the 1330s and 1340s. Furthermore, as we have seen, there is evidence that the historical tradition played a role in the shaping of *Des Grantz Geanz* and that the Anglo-Norman and Latin compilers drew upon the themes of legal right and fortune's whim to integrate Albina fully within the history of England. It cannot be taken for granted, therefore, that before 1330 the story of Albina and the giants was primarily, if not exclusively, of literary import, as Carley and Crick have suggested.⁹⁹ The compiler of *Castelford's Chronicle* certainly thought otherwise, and while the dating of both that single manuscript and of the Long Version of the Anglo-Norman Prose *Brut* is up for debate, either compiler would have needed not only to translate their version, but also to alter it from verse to prose, in order to suit the rest of their narrative.

Second, the geographical range of these works is also quite broad. *Castelford's Chronicle* emerged from a northern context, the *Anonymous Short Metrical Chronicle* was most likely produced in London, and the earliest manuscripts of the *De origine gigantum* emanated from Glastonbury. The varied contexts of manuscript production resist unification on both political and textual grounds – which accounts for the broad and widespread value of the story. Londoners had welcomed Queen Isabella with open arms when she arrived in England only to regret that decision. Glastonbury Abbey had been the subject of Edward I and Edward III's Arthurian visits, and its people had responded to the monarchs' requests to justify England's claims to Scottish overlordship. However, they had also responded to

⁹⁹ Carley and Crick, "Constructing Albion's Past," 365-66.

Edward II's requests for precedents under which his favorites could be recalled to England, and as a petition to Edward III indicates, had sought the young king's protection against the encroachment and mismanagement of Edward II's favorites.¹⁰⁰ In the monastic context that these manuscripts circulated, the Albina story could have been included for its moral import and the questions it raised about proper governance just as much, if not more, than it could have been for the story's pre-Trojan "foundation." As the *Historia* and the *Roman de Brut* had been at the time of their production, the legend of Albina was ambiguous enough to be versatile, and the compilers who made use of it exploited or eliminated those ambiguities as they saw fit. In doing so, they were responding to an historical situation that was no less ambiguous, in which present tension and uncertainty combined with hope, and which drove the creation and re-creation of Britain's legendary past.

Thus, from the earliest versions onward there was a historical import to Albina's narrative, one that led authors and readers to recombine different versions of the narrative for over a century after. In the discussion of these adaptations, my aim has not been to unify any one text or point to elements copied from another tradition, but rather to illustrate the multitude of ways in which compilers of these early historical works drew upon the Albina story to augment and amplify themes in the history of England. The sisters' noble status may be emphasized as the source (or justification) for their unruliness as in *Des Grantz Geanz*, the Long Anglo-Norman prose *Brut*, and the *Short English Metrical Chronicle*. It may be used as illustration and justification of their punishment, as in the Short prose *Brut* and the *De Origine Gigantum*, or it might hold them up for (unfavorable) comparison to other noble women, as is the case in *Castleford's Chronicle*. In all instances, the usefulness of the Albina narrative surpasses the boundaries of the prologue and creates a continuous whole.

¹⁰⁰ *A Calendar of Close Rolls Preserved in the Public Record Office: Edward III 1227-1330* (London: 1896), 332.

The Albina narrative was persuasive and effective partially because it filled in a gap in Britain's ancient past, a past that increasingly associated the entire territory of Britain with England, but which also detailed how easily its peoples could fall from grace. For Wace, such falls were a way to ascribe an ending to the British history, so that Britain could become "England." Now, however, English overlordship of Scotland and Wales provided the opposite impetus. It was necessary to make English history "British" once more. Albina's brief tenure of the island not only augmented the pattern of England's history as a prologue, but also set the tone for the negotiation of sovereignty, power, and good governance that was to follow, both in the Anglo-Norman and Middle English *Bruts*, and also in the political climate of England over the next two centuries.

Epilogues and Echoes: Reading Albina in John Hardyng's *Chronicle*

More than a century after the Albina legend had first become attached to the early history of England in *Castleford's Chronicle*, another English poet composed a rendition and expansion of the history of England. John Hardyng, a soldier and courtier of Henry VI, completed his *Chronicle* around 1457. Two versions of the text were composed: the first dedicated to the king, and the second, more invective version was dedicated to his rival, Richard, Duke of York, and his son, then Edward IV.¹⁰¹ Hardyng's intent in composing his *Chronicle* was to give an accurate rendition of England's territorial claims over Scotland, and convince the English monarchy to pursue those claims. Hardyng took pains to establish the

¹⁰¹ Sarah Peverly has worked extensively on the versions of Hardyng's chronicle and has just released an edition of the earlier version, which will greatly facilitate comparison between the two. J. Simpson and S. Peverly eds., *John Hardyng, Chronicle*, (Kalamazoo MI: Medieval Institute Publications, 2015). The Yorkist version was printed and continued by Richard Grafton in 1543, and later edited by Henry Ellis. Citations to the chronicle below are from Ellis' edition, *The Chronicle of Iohn Hardyng* (London: 1812).

accuracy of his narrative through chronological correlation but also through more novel methods such as the provision of documents relating England's sovereignty over Scotland, some of which he claims to have recovered himself at great risk, but which he more likely forged.¹⁰²

Hardyng's *Chronicle* included not one, but two versions of the Albina story, along with a short history of man's descent from Adam, through the Trojans, and down to Brutus. Hardyng, however, declaims both versions of the Albina story as inaccurate in their rendition, but the Syrian one even more so, and uses chronological reference to do so. Syria, Hardyng tells his readers, had no ruler until Saul, who ruled at the end of the third age in the time of the prophet Samuel.¹⁰³ Hardyng thought it more plausible that the compiler had modified the story of Danaus' fifty daughters, who married the king of Egypt's fifty sons, murdered them, and were exiled, arriving in Albion and spawning giants. This story is truer, Hardyng tells his audience, "in their [the daughters'] persons more / than in the daughters of Dioclesian."¹⁰⁴ Furthermore, he claims, the daughters of Danaus were said to have arrived on the island during the 72nd year of Aioth, judge of Israel, around 1200 BC, and 105 years before Brutus arrived on the island.¹⁰⁵

Hardyng's narrative, on the one hand, shows how much the inclusion of chronology and Latin universal history could change the vernacular history of England found in the *Brut* and in *Castelford's Chronicle*. We have seen how the Albina legend, in some of its iterations, provided not only a thematic but a chronological prequel to England's history, and Hardyng

¹⁰² See A. Hiatt, *The Making of Medieval Forgeries: False Documents in Fifteenth-Century England* (London: British Library: 2004), 102-135. Ellis took a more sympathetic view of Hardyng, believing him to be the unwitting victim of the forgery rather than the forger himself (*Hardyng's Chronicle*, viii-ix).

¹⁰³ Ellis, *Hardyng's Chronicle*, 26.

¹⁰⁴ Ellis, *Hardyng's Chronicle*, 27.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

seizes upon this to discredit the story of Diocletian's daughters. The blending of vernacular and Latin, learned and "popular" narratives that began in the early fourteenth century continued up to and after Hardyng's time, and will be discussed in the next chapter. However, the similarities between the works are also worth noting. Two versions of Hardyng's *Chronicle* were necessary, however, because in 1461 Edward IV had deposed the (still-living) monarch, Henry VI, as well as the Lancastrian/Scottish coalition led by Henry's wife, Matilda of France.

If the aim of Hardyng's digression was to prove that the Albina story in its Syrian version is chronologically inaccurate and thus "not trewe," why insist on the substitution of Danaus' daughters? Hardyng, I argue, insists that the story of these murderous women is still "trewe in their (i.e. the *Danaides*) persones more," because rather than discard Albina, he wishes to preserve the moral intent of the story.¹⁰⁶ The chapter containing Hardyng's discussion is foregrounded by the heading "nota: women desire above all things sovereignty, and to my concept, more in this land than in any other, for they have it of the nature of the said sisters."¹⁰⁷ Hardyng is thus asserting his historical *bona fides* by criticizing the particular iteration of the story, while simultaneously defending what he and the *Brut* compilers considered the most important aspect of the narrative: Albina's representation of disorder, re-emerging as a critique of his own political circumstances.

For most of the scholars who have discussed the Albina story in Hardyng's *Chronicle*, this passage is a curiosity or a sign of the myth's declining importance.¹⁰⁸ However, I argue

¹⁰⁶ Ellis, *Hardyng's Chronicle*, 27.

¹⁰⁷ Ellis, *Hardyng's Chronicle*, 26.

¹⁰⁸ Lesley Johnson believes that the story's inclusion "is made to play a part in the shaping of a national stereotype for the women of England in the fifteenth century." (Return to Albion, 38); Lisa Ruch offers a somewhat lengthier consideration of Hardyng's source for the alternative story, but ultimately attributes the

that Hardyng, along with the chroniclers that came before and after him, continued to see historical parallels through the narrative of Albina and her sisters, as they did through the other figures in the *Brut*, women and men alike. The narrative resonances of Britain's early history increased and accumulated with time, rather than being replaced or made anew with every iteration. While it might be tempting to see in Hardyng, as other scholars have, "old" or "popular" history competing with "new" or "critical" history, what we witness instead is a blending of the two, the traditional uses of the past creating the need to accurately represent it. The troubles with Edward IV's succession were not a simple recasting of Edward III's. However, they did recall those troubles, and demand a history that, for Hardyng and for others, was true both in its persons and in its evidence. Albina's lasting contribution to the history of Britain, England, and eventually Great Britain, was not as a "founding mother," but as an embodiment of the upheaval inscribed upon Britain's political landscape.

Hardyng's ambiguity over Albina would persist into the sixteenth century, in a printed edition produced by Richard Grafton. Grafton's inclusion of the text came with a disclaimer to the reader to pardon Hardyng for the "popish superstition of his times," cutting across another religious divide. Not long after, another gigantic etymology for the island would be introduced in its place by John Bale, who stated that the name of Albion was taken from a Noachian giant, killed by Hercules. In the narratives of English history printed after Grafton's then, the association of Albina with Albion disappeared, but not completely.¹⁰⁹ References to disorderly sisters remained in the narratives, but, aside from the change in religion and critical attitudes, I suggest that another development was ultimately

inclusion to Hardyng's critical attitude, *Albina and her Sisters*, 88-91. See also C. Desmet, "Afterlives of the Prose *Brut* in Early Modern Chronicles and Literature." *Trivium* 36 (2006): 227-46.

¹⁰⁹ Johnson mentions this as a "boundary" for the Albina story in England's history, "Return to Albion," 37. and see below, pp. 237 and 273-4.

efficacious at removing Albina as an example of female misrule: the long-enduring reign of a powerful female monarch in Elizabeth I.

Chapter Three

Rule and Governance: Reading the Early History of Britain in the Middle English Prose *Brut*

This kyng Edward [III] was forsoth of a passyng goodnes and ful *graciousness* among all þe worthy men of þe world... for as in his begynnyng al thinges were ioyful and lykyng to hym and to all þe people. And in his myd age he passid al men in hye joy worship and blessidnesse. Right so whan he drow into age drawyng donward þurgh lecherie and othir synmys letil and litil al the ioyfull and blessed things good fortune and *prosperitie* decrecyed and myshappid and infortunate thinges and unprofitable harmes with many evelis bygan for to spring. and þe more harme is contynuyd longe tyme after.

Richard Osborn, Clerk of the Chamber of the London Guildhall, copied these words at the end of a Middle English *Brut* Chronicle sometime around 1414.¹ In its short eulogy of Edward III, Osborn's *Brut* commemorated not only the deceased monarch, but also a turn of Fortune's wheel for the land he had ruled. The forty years after Edward III's death in 1377 had brought new developments to English society and politics as well as the specter of contested succession once again.

The reigns of Richard II (r. 1377-1399) and Henry IV (r. 1399-1413) are discussed as a period of profound uncertainty about the stability of England's government.² Richard's reign contained episodes of civic unrest from every strata of English society: the risings of the commons in the 1380s marked its beginnings and the revolt of his barons eventually brought about its end. Unease over Richard's deposition, along with concerns over religious

¹ The dating of the manuscript and Richard Osborn's career are discussed in L. Mooney and E. Stubbs, *Scribes and the City: London Guildhall Clerks and the Dissemination of Middle English Literature 1375-1425* (Woodbridge: York Medieval Press, 2013), 17-38, esp. 19.

² P. Strohm, *England's Empty Throne: Usurpation and the Language of Legitimation, 1399-1422* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1998); A. Ruddick, *English Identity and Political Culture in the Fourteenth Century*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013); C. Given-Wilson, *Henry IV* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2016).

heterodoxy, likewise hampered Henry IV. Unlike Richard, Henry is portrayed as apt, if not ambitious, but both kings sat uneasily upon England's throne.³

At the same time, increasing attention has been drawn to the types of activities the two rulers encouraged, civic display and literary patronage chief among them, to promote themselves as capable monarchs. During his lifetime, Richard II continued the tradition of public spectacle that Edward I and III had used so effectively to highlight their conquests. His marriages to Anne of Bohemia (d.1494) and to Isabella of Valois, as well as his ceremonial reconciliation with the citizens of London all projected overtones of sacred, effective kingship. He also sought to immortalize his rule by means of such building projects as the decoration of Westminster Abbey.⁴ His involvement in ceremony was continued after his deposition and death in 1399, in several successive attempts by the new ruler of England, Henry of Bolingbroke, to quash rumors that Richard remained alive.⁵

If Richard II is preserved in the chronicles as an ineffective ruler, the problem of succession sprang as much from Edward III's prolific number of offspring as it did from misgovernance or from England's declining military fortunes in France. As the large number of genealogies produced in the fifteenth century make apparent, several other potential claimants to the throne could be found among the descendants of Edward's remaining sons. The Lancastrian monarchs enjoyed a tenuous hold on power that they sought to secure by promoting many of the same literary figures as their predecessors had. The works of Chaucer, Gower, and Lydgate all bear the marks of this political and social climate, if not the

³ Christopher Given-Wilson's new account attempts to correct the perception that these events precipitated the Wars of the Roses, citing the influence of Shakespeare and the earlier Tudor historians for its persistence. (*Henry IV*, 531-33 and 537)

⁴ See G. Kipling, *Enter the King: Theater, Liturgy, and Ritual in the Medieval Civic Triumph* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1998); E. Scheifle, "Richard II and the Visual Arts," in *Richard II: The Art of Kingship*, ed. A. Goodman and J. Gillespie (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999), 255-72, esp. 261-62; Given-Wilson, *Henry IV*, 385-405.

⁵ Strohm, *Empty Throne*, 101-28.

direct encouragement of the monarchs themselves. The change in rulership also brought with it a renewed interest in the history of England, as poets and historians alike revisited “Brut’s Albion.”⁶ Perhaps the greatest beneficiary of this explosion in fifteenth-century historical production was the Middle English Prose *Brut* Chronicle.⁷

As with the fourteenth-century Anglo-Norman chronicles that preceded it, the Middle English *Brut* and its continuations were largely anonymous compositions. As the previous chapter discussed, the story of Albina and her sisters begins the *Brut* as a “Prologue,” and from there its earliest versions narrate the history of England from the arrival of Brutus down to either 1333 or 1377, providing a continuous, if not unbroken, narrative of rule and conquest down to the end of Edward III’s reign. Additional anonymous continuations, which extend the narrative to 1419 and 1437, were produced during the reign of Henry VI. At the end of the century, the narrative received a continuation to 1461 printed by William Caxton under the title *The Chronicles of England*.⁸ More than 180 full or partial manuscripts of the *Brut* still survive today, most of which date from the fifteenth century. Thus, the Middle English *Brut* stands as one of the most commonly produced works of the fifteenth century. It is also the most prolific evolution of Geoffrey of Monmouth’s *Historia regum Britanniae*.⁹

⁶ Chaucer’s *Complaint to His Purse* famously mixes antiquity and constitutionalism with flattery as it addressed Henry IV. “O conquerour of Brutes Albyoun / Which that by line and free eleccioun / Been verray king, this song to yow I sende, / And ye that mowen alle oure harmes amende / Have minde upon my supplicacioun.”

⁷ L. Matheson, *The Prose Brut: the Development of an English Chronicle*, (Tempe, AZ: Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies, 1998). For the rest of this chapter, I will use the term Middle English *Brut* to refer to the chronicles contained in Matheson’s edition, with small additions. “Anglo-Norman *Brut*” will refer to the manuscripts listed in R. Dean ed., *Anglo-Norman Literature, A Guide to Texts and Manuscripts* (London, ANTS: 1999), 30-34.

⁸ See below, Chapter 5, pp. 190-98.

⁹ The *Historia* survives in roughly 230 manuscripts, dating from the twelfth to the fifteenth century. See J. Crick, *The Historia Regum Britanniae of Geoffrey of Monmouth, vol. 3: A Summary Catalogue of the Manuscripts* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1989).

Classifying this mountain of physical evidence has proved a difficult task for the historians and literary scholars who have attempted to edit the *Brut* or survey its manuscript tradition. The earliest sections of the chronicle are the most uniform and were based primarily on the Long Version of the Anglo-Norman *Brut*, with later details supplemented by other vernacular chronicles.¹⁰ Indeed, it is now common practice among scholars of the period to describe the Middle English *Brut* as a translation and continuation of the earlier Anglo-Norman chronicle tradition. For much of the twentieth century, definitions of what constituted a *Brut* chronicle varied widely and could be as expansive as any chronicle that began with, or included, the story of Brutus.¹¹ Alfred Hiatt summarized the situation aptly when he stated, “[t]here is not one *Brut*, nor one Middle English *Brut*, but many.”¹² While Lister Matheson’s painstaking catalogue of the then-known manuscripts, *The Prose Brut: The Development of a Middle English Chronicle*, has better defined the category of works that scholars now refer to as *Bruts*, the differences between these manuscripts are still significant.

For most scholars of the period, the *Brut* reflects the increasing popularity of historical writing, and especially chronicles, among a growing class of English gentry and aristocracy.¹³ Individual *Brut* manuscripts, e.g., Richard Osborn’s copy, feature heavily in studies of book production and circulation in late medieval England, just as they shed light

¹⁰ Matheson, *PB*, 6-8; J. Marvin, “Sources and Analogues of the Middle English prose *Brut* Chronicle: New Findings,” *Trivium* 36 (2006): 1-31.

¹¹ A. Gransden, “The Brut Chronicles and the Chronicles of London in the Fifteenth Century,” in *Historical Writing in England, vol. 2: c.1307 to the Early Sixteenth Century* (London: Routledge, 1982), pp. 220-248, esp. pp. 226-28; C. Kingsford, *English Historical Literature in the Fifteenth Century* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1913) 113-39. (hereafter *EHL*). For a reconsideration of the criteria, see, E. Kooper, “Longleat House MS 55: an Unacknowledged *Brut* Manuscript?” in *The Prose Brut and Other Late Medieval Chronicles: Books Have Their Histories*, ed. J. Rajsic, D. Hoche, and E. Kooper (Woodbridge: York Medieval Press, 2016), 75-93, at 88-93.

¹² A. Hiatt, “Historical Writing,” in *A Companion to Middle English Prose*, ed. A.S.G. Edwards (Rochester, NY: 2006), 175-194 at 176.

¹³ Matheson, *PB*, 12-13; T. Drukker, “I Read Therefore I Write: Readers’ Marginalia in Some Middle English Prose *Brut* Manuscripts,” *Trivium* 36 (2006): 97-130; J. Thompson, “The Middle English Prose *Brut* and the Possibilities of Cultural Mapping,” in *Design and Distribution of Late Medieval Manuscripts*, ed. M. Connolly and L. Mooney (York: York Medieval Press, 2008), 245-60.

on the activities of particular readers.¹⁴ Yet while the Middle English *Brut* is widely acknowledged as “the place where every Englishman learned his history,” it has not been asked precisely what sort of history was learnt from the pages of these chronicles, particularly those that dealt with Britain’s antiquity.¹⁵ Partly because of its relative uniformity and partly due to its brevity, little attention has been paid to the narrative of Britain’s early kings contained in the *Brut*. For both historians and literary scholars, the draw of the *Brut* lay in the material appended to the chronicle: its near-contemporary continuations or the “few inserted poems” that might have redeemed it as literature.¹⁶ In this view, the *Brut* and its books served as a root onto which other works might be grafted, but it garnered little notice or comment of its own.

Furthermore, as the subtitle of Matheson’s work suggests, the development of the *Brut* and its readership has been considered largely, if not exclusively, as a vernacular, if not a solely Middle English phenomenon. Among those who study the history of the book, the fifteenth century is defined by the dramatic surge in the production of all types of vernacular literature.¹⁷ The growth in manuscript production was, in turn, ascribed to a political climate where English was gaining importance and to a readership which was both growing in number and in sophistication.¹⁸ The story of an expanding readership, particularly among

¹⁴ See especially L. Matheson and L. Mooney, “The Beryn Scribe and His Texts: Evidence for Multiple-Copy Production of Manuscripts in Fifteenth-Century England,” *The Library*, 7th Series, 4 (2003): 347-70; and the articles in the special edition of *Trivium*, “The Readers and Writers of the Prose *Brut*,” No. 36 (2006).

¹⁵ C. Given-Wilson, *Chronicles: The Writing of History in Late Medieval England*, pp. xxii-xxiii.

¹⁶ Brie, *The Brut*, ix-x. A focus on new historical composition led Kingsford to share Brie’s view that the early part of the *Brut* was irrelevant due to its derivative status. Kingsford, *English Historical Literature*, 113 and 135. Given-Wilson, while also privileging new compilation, suggests that works like the *Brut* “can tell us a great deal about how people conceived and understood their past in the later Middle Ages.” (*Chronicles*, xxiii).

¹⁷ J. Boffey and J. Thompson, “Anthologies and Miscellanies: Production and Choice of Texts,” in J. Griffiths and D. Pearsall eds., *Book Production and Publishing in Britain 1375-1475* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 1989), 279-316.

¹⁸ Malcolm Parkes suggests that during the later Middle Ages “the history of lay literacy is dominated by the steady growth of literacy among the expanding middle class.” “The Literacy of the Laity,” in *Scribes, Scripts,*

members of gentry society, is one that the *Brut* manuscripts tell very well, albeit not to the exclusion of other social groups or readers fluent in other languages. Julia Marvin, whose work on the Anglo-Norman texts is ongoing, points to the continued interest in the Anglo-Norman *Brut* during this period, as well to the prevalence of Latin annotations in vernacular *Brut* manuscripts, as evidence of intersection between different reading audiences.¹⁹

Just as the previous chapter cautioned against interpreting the Albina story as “an Anglo-Norman Poem,” this chapter warns against treating the *Brut* solely as an expansion of Middle English prose texts. The fourteenth-century expansions and continuations of England’s early history provided the anonymous copyists and scribes of the *Brut* with an ancient history that could be inflected in many different ways. Thus, while the ensuing discussion will highlight the differences in the fifteenth-century manuscripts of the *Brut*, it must be stressed that these manuscripts can and should be used to draw broader conclusions about the reading and use of history in the later Middle Ages.

My aim in this chapter is to describe the text of the *Brut* in relation to its earlier antecedents, and, in doing so, to draw out a number of possible “readings” that could be pursued by its readers. I will then provide examples of how each of those readings could be inflected or augmented by additional interests or observations. Collectively, the next three chapters will place the historical narrative of the *Brut* within a series of expanding contexts, all influenced by the compilation of new manuscript books and the re-use of old ones. The next chapter will examine how the historical narrative of the *Brut* was augmented in connection with further Latin historical texts, while the fifth chapter examines the influence

and Readers: *Studies in the Communication, Presentation and Dissemination of Medieval Texts* (London: Hambledon, 1991), 275-297 at 278.

¹⁹ J. Marvin, “Latinity and Vernacularity in the Tradition of Geoffrey of Monmouth: Text, Apparatus, and Readership,” *The Medieval Chronicle* VIII (2013): 1-41. and “The Vitality of Anglo-Norman

of printed materials on the practices of reading history. Together, the three chapters do not present one way to read the early history of England, but rather show the vast worlds of understanding which could be brought to bear on the framework of Britain's kings.

Though I have separated these chapters, partially, along chronological and linguistic lines, I wish to stress that the reading of Britain's early history in the Middle English *Brut* was not completely distinct from the reworkings of history that came before. So, while this chapter will cover some of the same ground, this is because the fifteenth century saw the re-reading of older histories along with the modification of new ones. As individual copies of the *Brut* (in Latin, French, and Middle English) were encountered, read, and modified by their owners and scribes, the traditions of all three converged, recombining in ways that the versions of the Albina story had, and continued to do in the manuscript production of the fifteenth century.

I. Epic in Chronicle form: Narrative, Anecdote, Exemplum

What did reading Geoffrey of Monmouth's history as a chronicle entail? Scholars have emphasized the translations of the text through languages and literary forms, but the chronicles of the later Middle Ages also entailed a translation in focus. Instead of rhetoric and entertainment, Christopher Given-Wilson suggests that chronicles emphasized three features over all others in weaving together their texts: truth, usefulness, and memory.²⁰ The vernacular *Bruts* are unusual chronicles in this respect. Its prologue was not spent claiming its truthfulness nor insisting that its author had taken pains to gather the best sources. It simply told. From the "here a man shall hear" that began its prologue, the narrative of the *Brut*

²⁰ Given-Wilson, *Chronicles*, 1-15 and 57-78.

proceeded onward through the succession of its kings, with its audience occasionally being told that they would hear more.

This compression of Geoffrey's narrative appears to rob scholars of the literary tools they could employ to interpret the *Historia Regum Britanniae* and its twelfth-century translations. While preserving the outlines of Geoffrey's narrative, the Middle English *Brut* covered the same ground in less space. The Trojan Britons in the *Brut*, for the most part, were stripped of their heroic speeches and feats of battle and reduced to the bare elements of their stories. While the chronicle's form gave it an implied narrative continuity, often structured by time or genealogy, its strength lay in the ability to incorporate new material, often by simple juxtaposition.²¹

A key context for understanding the *Brut's* influence, I contend, is the sparseness of the chronicle's narrative. Scholars who have previously worked with the text have read the omissions in its fourteenth-century material as evidence of political bias towards the Lancastrian dynasty or, as they relate to Britain's early history, a declining interest in the deeds of Brutus and his descendants.²² The emphasis on detail over style is often mirrored in the annotations of these manuscripts, leaving scholars little opportunity to assess the motives and reactions of the *Brut's* readers.²³ Thus, while we know more than ever about the types of people who owned and, presumably, read the history, we still understand very little about what they read out of it. However, these gaps in the history also provided readers with the opportunity to bring their own perspectives to the chronicle and to understand it in

²¹ K. Tonry, "Reading History in Caxton's *Polychronicon*," *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 111/2 (2011): 169-198, 186.

²² W. Marx, "Reception and Revision in the Middle English Prose *Brut*," *Trivium* 36 (2006): 53-69, esp. 55-64. E.D. Kennedy, "History Repeats Itself: The Dartmouth *Brut* and Fifteenth-Century Historiography," *Digital Philology* 3 (2014): 196-214.

²³ T. Drukker, "I Read Therefore I Write: Readers' Marginalia in Some Middle English Prose *Brut* Manuscripts," *Trivium* 36 (2006): 97-130.

connection with a wider variety of texts. As they read, wrote, and encountered their past, they imparted new meaning to their ancient past, and reinscribed its values on the rest of the history they learned. As Joanna Bellis has recently argued, chronicles “were live and current, permanent and ancient; and their authors were fully possessed of their own power, their immediacy *and* longevity, and the collective nature of their voice.”²⁴

As in the Anglo-Norman Long version that preceded it, Middle English *Bruts* like Lambeth 491 contained descriptive chapter headings, often rubricated. These headings not only organized the text, but also summarized its contents. As such, they may have had a bearing on how, as well as what, was read in the chronicle. As finding aids, they would help a reader navigate the chronicle, but by isolating and describing the contents of a chapter, particularly a short chapter, they may also have encouraged its use as a standalone story. Annabel Patterson has elsewhere referred to such inserted elements as “anecdotes,” which, she suggests, can both complement and subvert the main narrative of a history.²⁵ By compressing and compartmentalizing the accounts of its kings, the *Brut* provided its readers with an overarching narrative that was also easily partible into smaller ones.

The portability that Patterson emphasizes in these short stories, moreover, has ties to practices of reading and recollection in the Middle Ages as well as the early modern period.²⁶ The reigns of some early kings are so short that the monarchs are only given one attribute: sometimes as little as “reigned well” or “reigned badly,” but more often a concrete action

²⁴ J. Bellis, *The Hundred Years War in Literature, 1337-1600* (Cambridge: DS Brewer, 2016), 57.

²⁵ Patterson defines these anecdotes as being “short enough to be emblematic, independent enough of its surroundings to be portable, that is to say relocatable from one chronology to another, from a chronological to an achronological spot, from one style or even one ideological perspective to another.” A. Patterson, “The Power of Anecdote in Tudor Historiography,” in *The Historical Imagination in Early Modern Britain: History, Rhetoric and Fiction 1500-1800*, ed. D. Kelley and P. Sacks (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 159-178, at 165.

²⁶ M. Carruthers, *The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture*. 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008); P. Geary, *Phantoms of Remembrance: Memory and Oblivion at the End of the First Millennium* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994) 132-34.

like the founding of a city. The monarch's place in England's history could thus be linked to his accomplishment as much as his place in succession. Readers could thus come away with a more focused understanding of Britain's early figures, and, if they were moving through the text in order, the minor kings would serve to link the narrative together across time. Scribes could aid this process by supplying marginal glosses, as Osborn did in Lambeth 491 when he numbered each king in succession. Separately, all of these figures could serve as *loci communes* for the gathering of additional information within the chronicle, especially if readers did not move through a text *seriatim* but were used to reading in shorter chunks.²⁷ The versatility the chronicle form provided its writers, in other words, should be recognized for its readers as well.

Table 1 gives an approximate representation of how much information the *Brut* conveyed about each of the kings that reigned before Arthur, in terms of the chapters devoted to them and the anecdotes in each. Unsurprisingly, the figures that occupy the most space tend to be those which played key roles in Geoffrey's *Historia*: Brutus and his sons, Lear, Brenne and Belin, Cassibelan and Caesar, Vortigern, and Hengist.²⁸ It is in these episodes that echoes of the rhetoric could be found, and looking at the narrative from this perspective highlights what readers might have done as they moved through it. As the *Brut* related its account of Britain's early kings, it invited its readers to imagine the detail and splendor of the Britons for themselves, or incorporate it from elsewhere.

²⁷ J. Dagenais, *The Ethics of Reading in Manuscript Culture: Glossing the Libro de Buen Amor* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 213.

²⁸ Even though it is condensed in detail, the narrative of Arthur's reign takes up considerably more space than any of the previous figures. Sixteen of the ninety-five chapters are devoted to his reign, along with the lengthy prophecies of Merlin.

II. Discord and Conquest in the Prose *Brut*

Unlike many of the other vernacular *Bruts*, the Albina story was a part of the chronicle's development from the very beginning. The Albina prologue in this narrative is a faithful translation of the version that appeared in the Anglo-Norman Long Version, which continued to be read and copied in the fifteenth century as well. The prologue contained the details of the sisters' rebellion against and murder of their husbands, their exile by Diocletian their father, and Albina's perfunctory claiming of the desolate island. In this rendition, Albina and her sisters are openly pagan, transgressive, and punished. The narrative is as much about Diocletian's treatment of his daughters and the lords under his rule as it is about the rebellion of the sisters, and their activities on the island are limited to feeding themselves and engendering the giants who will last down to the time of Brutus. As in the Anglo-Norman Long Version, chapter headings are given in the Middle English manuscripts.²⁹ The earliest surviving copies, which date from c. 1400, summarize the story not in terms of the giants, as the Anglo-Norman versions did, but in terms of the naming of the island. Neither the giants nor the sisters enjoy primacy of activity on the island. Their importance to the story lies in their presence rather than any activity.

As with the Anglo-Norman version, Albina's role in the Middle English *Brut* has been subject to varied interpretation. Tamar Drukker, whose article on the prologue treated the Middle English version as an "alternative foundation," took the silence of the narrator about Albina's crimes as tacit support.³⁰ In her reading, the sisters are right to rebel against their husbands, since they are of higher status. Nor is the conception of giants problematic,

²⁹ The Long Version remains unedited, and I have been unable to examine any of its manuscripts in person. However, Marvin's work on the Long Version references Brie's Middle English translation, reinforcing the links between the two. See J. Marvin, *Oldest*, 51 and "Sources and Analogues," 30-31.

³⁰ T. Drukker, "Thirty-Three Murderous Sisters: A Pre-Trojan Foundation Myth in the Middle English Prose *Brut* Chronicle," *The Review of English Studies*, N.S. 54 (2003): 445-63, 457-8.

as it makes the island of Albion (Britain) resemble the Promised Land and provides Brutus with a direct means of demonstrating his civilizing power. Albina, Drukker points out, is not the only woman in the *Brut* to have engaged in demonic intercourse: Merlin's mother is said to have conceived her child in a similar manner, and she is honored, rather than punished, by Vortigern for this reason. "What then," she concludes, "is the Syrian women's crime? There is none. Although they are not the mothers of the nation, they are the first inhabitants of the island, and the first to give it a name."³¹ Drukker links the Syrian women not only to antiquity, but also to the succession of British women who rebel against unjust authority, like Gwentholyn, and, more broadly, to the complex issues of oppression and subjugation that follow in the *Brut*.

As we have seen from the discussion of the Albina story's earlier versions, this reading is at odds with the treatment of the sisters and other rebellious women in the early history of Britain. The Syrian women's crime is, unquestionably, murder, and possibly treason as well. They assert their "right," not in open battle, but through the slaughter of their defenseless husbands, and in this they have more in common with events that result in the deficit of proper rule (the murder of Ferrex by Idon and the slaughter of the British earls by Hengist) than its assertion (as in the case of Gwentholyn and Cordelia's recovery of Britain's territory). Indeed, the same tension between good and evil female figures found in the earlier Latin and Anglo-Norman *Bruts* were preserved in the text of the Middle English *Brut*, down through the reign of Edward III. Even though the Middle English version is a faithful translation of the Anglo-Norman Long Version, the correspondence between their texts should not be taken to mean that this version was the only one known to the compilers

³¹ Drukker, "Thirty-three Murderous Sisters," 461.

of the Common Version of the *Brut*. Several decades of writing about Albina preclude that possibility.

Indeed, the summation of the prologue reveals the further evolution of Albina's role in Britain, England, and Great Britain's history. The text in Oxford, MS Rawlinson 171, reads "Here endeth þe prolog of Albyon, þat þo was an Ile. And herkeneth now how Brute was geten."³² While the heading goes on to relate the change in Albion's name from Britain to England, the phrase "þat þo was an Ile" is odd. Albion did not lose its insular status with its change in name. However, in the Albina story and its use in history, I suggest that we might insert the phrasing from Castleford's Chronicle in this space. Albion, "an Isle *all nylysme*," continues to be so throughout its history, yielding its obedience to no party without challenge.

The sisters, along with their gigantic offspring, *embody* rather than *engender* the wilderness in the island. We have seen that earlier readings of their activities as "civilizing" are fraught with difficulty, even in the longer and more descriptive versions of the Albina story. In the Middle English *Brut*, no such attempt is made, either to reference their former nobility, or moralize over their monstrous punishment. Rather, they are presented as exceedingly beautiful on the outside and deceptive and treacherous within, a fact which readers of the Middle English *Brut* noted in their annotations. In this respect, while they may prefigure successive characters in the history, they also have larger parallels to the territory of Britain itself. While successive peoples are able to impose order, law, and civilization on this bountiful but unstable land, they are unable to do so indefinitely.

³² Brie, *The Brut*, 4.

Albina and her sisters, then, embody a tension that had run through the early history of Britain since the time of Geoffrey and Wace. Britain was both the “best of islands” and one that defied a ready, seamless explanation of its people. Wace had refuted Geoffrey of Monmouth’s claims of British resurgence, in part, by transforming legitimation by prophecy into legitimation by conquest, leaving the possibility that successive peoples could legitimately possess Britain. While previous historians had explained the downfall of peoples to impiety or fortune, or sought to smooth over the passage of dominion from one people to another, the English *Brut* inscribed the spin of fortune’s wheel into the fabric of the land itself. It acknowledges, in other words, that the cycles of foreign invasion, territorial expansion, and crisis are inevitable, and thus makes the early history of the island useful to its successive groups. What began in Geoffrey of Monmouth’s *Historia* as a promised land prophetically destined for its chosen people, had become by the late fourteenth century a site of contestation as well as plenty; a plurality of peoples fought to achieve what could only be temporary mastery over each other.

Further adaptations to the Middle English *Brut* also highlighted the divisions and ambiguities inherent in the early history, emphasizing the transfer of rule through conquest. The narrative of the *Brut* preserves discord as the source of Brenne and Belin’s episode, as well as the source of the Britons’ eventual conquest by the Romans. By a paring down of the details of battles found in Geoffrey and Wace, readers of the *Brut* were led to focus more on the cause of the episodes and their ultimate conclusion (conquest) than on any rhetorical or stylistic details.

The period in Britain’s early history that receives the most attention in the *Brut* is the succession of kings from Vortigern to Arthur, during which time the Saxons arrive and

Merlin appears to offer prophetic advice. While the individual battles of Arthur are the most faithfully enumerated, the *Brut* preserves his negotiations with the Roman messengers as the central event of his reign. Rather than the splendor of his court at Camelot, the *Brut* dedicates a separate chapter heading to each of Arthur's interactions with the Romans—including much of the text of the letters to and from the Romans. References to the shared Trojan ancestry of both people are no longer present. The demands of both sides are made through conquest, and Arthur refers the Romans not to Brenne and Belin as previous conquerors, but to Constantine and Maximian, who served as Emperors.³³ Arthur's defeat of the Romans, as well as his undoing by Mordred, proceeds apace. Thus, while these individual episodes preserve the outline of Geoffrey's *Historia* in its fullest extent, the focus of the *Brut* is on the transition of power through conquest.

III. Unity through Religion

If the message of the *Brut*'s early history was no longer that the Britons were a providentially chosen people, or even a particularly unified one, what other themes might its readers have found in it? As the detail in the *Brut* was pared down, the religious qualities of the early British kings became more apparent. Indeed, many of the episodes preserved at length are the stories of Britain's first saints and converts. As with the theme of division, the Albina story begins this process. In addition to providing the giants for Brutus to conquer, Albina foils Brutus in another important way. By becoming more obviously treacherous and murderous, Albina inherits some of the ambiguity given to Brutus in versions of the history more similar to Geoffrey of Monmouth and Wace. When the two figures are compared and

³³ Brie, *The Brut*, 82.

contrasted, it is often mentioned that both are murderers and exiles: Brutus having killed his mother in childbirth and his father in a hunting accident.³⁴

Setting aside the false equivalence between accidental manslaughter and cold-blooded murder, these comparisons overlook two modifications to Brutus' character made by the compilers of the Anglo-Norman Long Version of the *Brut* and preserved in the Middle English *Bruts*.³⁵ The first is Brutus' relationship with the Greek King, Pandrasus. In the *Historia* and its earlier vernacular translations, Brutus arrives in Greece and is taken in by the Trojans, where he learns of their abuse at the hands of Pandrasus, the Greek king. Brutus immediately sends a hostile letter to Pandrasus, warning him that the Trojans deserve to be free and that he, as their leader, will fight for their freedom.³⁶ In the Middle English *Brut*, Brutus arrives in Greece and becomes a favored companion of Pandrasus. He deserts the king after hearing of the cruelties the Greeks have inflicted on his people, fleeing into the woods with them to defend their freedom.³⁷ While this modification is small, it serves to cast Brutus in the model of another great founder of nations: he is not only the Aeneas of the Britons, he becomes their Moses as well.

Second, in the *Historia*, Brutus defeats Pandrasus through a series of military tactics that border on treachery and had much in common with the deceptive tactics employed by the Normans in Dudo's *De moribus*. After first ambushing the Greek army and capturing the King's brother, Brutus defeats the main force of the Greeks by sneaking his army into the Greek camp with the help of a captured Greek soldier, then slaughtering Pandrasus' men in

³⁴ Drukker, "Thirty-Three Murderous Sisters," 456; Ruch, *Albina and her Sisters*, pp. 104-5.

³⁵ These alterations are unique, as far as I know, to these two chronicles. The varied vernacular versions discussed above (even Castleford's Chronicle, which is the closest link with respect to the Albina story) follow the narrative of Geoffrey and Wace.

³⁶ HRB I: 92-103.

³⁷ HRB I: 65-79. Marvin, *Oldest*, 75; Brie, *The Brut*, 6.

their sleep and taking the king prisoner.³⁸ In the Anglo-Norman and Middle English *Bruts*, these details are omitted, replaced with the statement that Brutus defended himself against the Greeks and captured the king.³⁹ As the fourteenth century went on, the inclusion of the Albina story with this version of Brutus' narrative preserved the instability and ambiguity inherent in Geoffrey's *Historia Regum Britanniae*, but located it outside the figure of Brutus, who became a fusion of classical and Christian virtue; part *Aeneid*, part Exodus.

As the early history of Britain was further condensed in the Middle English *Brut*, the island's elect status took up a larger portion of the narrative. A reader of the Middle English version would see evidence of this beginning immediately after the conquest of Britain by Julius Caesar, with the conversion of King Lucius, which was supposed to have taken place in 56 CE, proceeding through the succession of Constantine the Great and his mother St. Helena.⁴⁰ Within these chapters, the details of Roman occupation of Britain are pared down and the activities of godly British figures emerge to fill the gaps.

Immediately after St. Helena, readers of the *Brut* would encounter another famous British martyr, St. Ursula. Ursula is sent to Brittany by her father, along with 11,000 virgins, to provide wives for the British settlers there.⁴¹ Their ships are blown off course in the Channel, and Ursula and her companions are captured by Gowanus, the pagan ruler of Cologne. Ursula convinces her companions that it would be better to die than be made concubines of the pagans, and the women "were all martrede for the love of God, and ligget at Cologne."⁴² In Wace and Geoffrey's accounts, Ursula does not feature prominently as a

³⁸ *HRB I*: 110-216. The account of the first ambush adds a further tilt to the odds by referring to the Greeks as "unarmed" (inermes).

³⁹ Marvin, *Oldest*, 77; Brie, *The Brut*, 7.

⁴⁰ Brie, *The Brut*, 37-38, 40.

⁴¹ Brie, *The Brut*, 43.

⁴² Brie, *The Brut*, 44.

martyr, but by the fifteenth century, she was clearly identified with the episode, and with the succession of British faithful as they fought the influence of pagan invasion.⁴³ The ancient history of Britain in the *Brut*, then, intensified the Britons' role as a Christian people, in pointed contrast to the later adopters of the religion: the Romans, Saxons, and the French.⁴⁴ The text thus provided a framework for such later Anglo-Saxon saints as Edward the Confessor, as well as a basis for evaluating individual rulers' controversies with the Church within England (in the case of Henry II and Thomas Beckett) and outside England.

IV. Prophetic Convergence

One of the key points of divergence between Geoffrey's *Historia* and the Anglo-Norman versions which followed Wace was the inclusion of Merlin's prophecies. As the first chapter discussed, the easiest way to normalize the history of the Britons within the context of other Trojan peoples was to turn their succession by prophecy into succession by conquest. The historical writers of the fourteenth century, in turn, further problematized the issue of the Britons' elect status as they joined Geoffrey's history to those of the succession of peoples who had conquered the Britons. Complicating matters further, the Anglo-Norman *Bruts* had already related that England's later monarchs were incorporating Arthurian pageantry for themselves.⁴⁵ Thus, while a reader of the Arthurian episodes in the *Brut* would encounter a succession of Merlin's prophecies, the function of these insertions

⁴³ HRB V 371-395 mentions that not all the women are pleased with becoming husbands, and that they are killed by the Huns and Picts. Wace emphasizes the women's suffering, and mentions that Ursula was beheaded at Cologne. *Castleford's Chronicle* (11880-12287) provides a greatly embellished version that relates Ursula's journey as a pilgrimage to Rome, and separates it from the murder of the common women. The vernacular *Bruts* appear to be the first combine the two legends into one. See Marvin, *Oldest*, 123-5.

⁴⁴ This feature was often directly noted by readers of the Middle English *Bruts*. It was also highlighted in the printed editions of the *Chronicles of England*.

⁴⁵ Brie, *The Brut*, 261-2. See above, Chapter 2, pp.73-79.

was not to guarantee Arthur's return, but to provide a connection with the reigns of the later English kings.

The largest section of Merlin's prophecies in the *Brut* come after Arthur's coronation, and relate the six final kings to reign in England. These prophecies were the work of a fourteenth-century author, and elsewhere are known as the *Six Kings to Follow John*.⁴⁶ Within the text, however, these prophecies are made to correspond to the Anglo-Saxon and Norman rulers, with chapters after their deaths interpreting the prophecy. While the use of these elements is sporadic in the text, the vernacular *Bruts* appear to have taken one of the most divisive elements of Geoffrey's *Historia* and turned it into a possible point of assimilation, and have done so by putting new words in the mouth of an old oracle.

Merlin, however, was an ambiguous inheritance, and traces of his older prophecies about Arthur remained in the *Brut*. The final ruler who merits mention here is the last king of the Britons, Cadwallader. The Anglo-Norman versions of the *Brut* had modified a key piece of Geoffrey's early British history, the passage of dominion between the Britons and the Saxons. In the *Historia Regum Britanniae* and its early translations, Cadwallader, the last king of the Britons, is forced by invasion and disease to flee the island into Brittany along with his people. Cadwallader laments the expulsion that has finally befallen the Britons, not at the hands of invading pagan armies, but at the hands of God. He ultimately travels to Rome to seek the favor of the Pope, and to cleanse the sin of the Britons so they may once more regain their prophesied island, but leaves his nephews to rule over the Britons that remain in England and protect them from the invading Saxons.

⁴⁶ See Marvin, *Oldest*, 49-50; T. Smallwood, "The Prophecy of the Six Kings," *Speculum* 60 (1985): 571-92.

As previously discussed, Wace translated the episode, but dismissed any potential for the Britons to regain control of the island, and in omitting the episode entirely, the Anglo-Norman *Brut* may be seen as a continuation of this impulse.⁴⁷ According to Julia Marvin, the removal of Cadwallader presents a continuous transfer of power from king to king, even as it breaks a national or genealogical boundary.⁴⁸ For the Normans and their descendants, the right of conquest became the measure by which rightful rule should be established.

While the earliest versions of the Middle English *Brut* omitted the reign of Cadwallader, the *Brut's* fifteenth century compilers discovered ways to work the monarch back into the narrative. In the Latinate tradition of history writing (following Bede) Cadwallader had been a minor king in Britain, and some compilers of the *Bruts* included him in this respect. The next chapter will discuss these compilations in greater detail, but two other Middle English variations which included the episode and perhaps, preserved its prophetic intent. These variations, which Matheson called the Abbreviated and Extended Versions, are thought to have been based upon the text of the *Brut* to 1377, even though no surviving fourteenth century manuscript of the chronicle is currently extant, and also show the influence of the *Short English Metrical Chronicle*.⁴⁹ Cadwallader's lament for the Britons not only re-introduces the Britons as a distinct people in Wales, but it also contains an update from the earliest versions. Among his waves of invading peoples, Cadwallader invites not only the Romans, Picts, and Saxons to invade England, but also the "Frenshmen," whose place in the contested history of England is now assured. By updating the succession of

⁴⁷ See above, Chapter 1, pp. 55-66.

⁴⁸ J. Marvin, "Narrative, Lineage, and Succession in the Anglo-Norman Prose *Brut* Chronicle," in *Broken Lines: Genealogical Literature in Late Medieval Britain and France*, ed. D. Kennedy and R. Radulescu (Turnhout: Brepols, 2008), 205-220, at 211.

⁴⁹ Matheson, *Prose Brut*, 174-177.

England's conquerors, however, the *Brut* leaves open the possibility that the prophetic return of the Britons may yet come to pass.

V. Law, Common Assent, Common Will

The Middle English *Brut* preserves a less-unified version of Britain and Albion than its earlier counterparts, again by way of its Anglo-Norman antecedents. In the earlier versions and their derivatives, Brutus' division of Britain among his three sons takes place within Britain's boundaries.⁵⁰ However, in the Middle English *Brut*, when Brutus decides to divide his territory, he gives all the land of Britain to his eldest son, and then discovers two additional lands to the north (Scotland) and west (Wales), which go to the younger sons. While this supported the idea of primogeniture, it also gave the impression that Wales and Scotland were not originally part of Albion, which had become Britain.

By the end of the fourteenth century, the narrative that built upon the legendary origins of England also emphasized the ethnic heterogeneity of England, lamenting that the upheaval of Edward II's reign was due in part to mismanagement, in part to the influence of foreigners. Both the Anglo-Norman and the Middle English *Bruts* suggest that "if the great lords of England had been married only to English people, then should there have been peace and rest among them, without any envy."⁵¹ This message is tempered somewhat by the intensifying references to England as a legal community as represented in its parliaments or in the "community of the realm" following the arrival of the Norman kings. While these

⁵⁰ In the *HRB*, Brutus' sons divide his territory among themselves after his death, while in the later versions Brutus establishes his sons in their separate territories while still alive.

⁵¹ M. Lamont, "The Kynde Bloode of Engelande': Remaking Englishness in the Middle English Prose *Brut*." (Unpublished PhD Dissertation, University of California at Los Angeles, 2007), 1-2

references would have been out of place in the early twelfth century, by the fifteenth century the ancient Britons became responsible for repairing the rifts in their community.

Unlike the narratives of Geoffrey and Wace, the chapter headings in the *Brut's* account call explicit attention to the points where the lineage of the British kings fails or a king dies without heirs. Rather than have the kings that follow succeed without mention, the Middle English *Brut* establishes a narrative pattern where the Britons choose and crown their monarchs and specifically states that they refuse to tolerate misrule.⁵² Not only are Brutus and his successors the first lawgivers, but after the turmoil of the fourteenth century, the British people became the arbiters of good governance in the *Brut*, a tradition “passed down” to them by the later continuations, which portray the community of the realm acting against improper rule.

As in the Long Version of the Anglo-Norman *Brut*, the Middle English *Brut* portrays Isabella less favorably than the earlier chronicles, depicting her as a changing character throughout the reigns of Edward II and Edward III. While Isabella is not implicated in the outward acts of treachery and murder of her lover, Roger Mortimer, her counsel is given, first and foremost, as the reason that her son relinquishes (wrongly) his claims to Scotland.⁵³ Indeed, although Mortimer's behavior was singled out by the *Brut* for more direct chastisement, Isabella is mentioned first when the activities of government are concerned.

Indeed, Isabella's transition from rightful queen to improper tyrant is one of the most interesting aspects of these chapters of the *Brut*. In the episodes discussed in the

⁵² After the reigns of Ferres (Ydon's son), Cassibelan, Lucius, and Arthur. See Table 1.

⁵³ Brie, *The Brut*, 255. “The Kyng Edward...prou3 conseile of his moder and of Sir Roger Mortymer, ordeyned a parliament at Nor[t]hampton; at þe whiche parlement þe Kyng, þrou3 her conseil and none oþere of þe land wipin age, grantede to bene accordede wip þe Scottes in þis maner, þat all þe feautes and homages þat þe Scottes shulde done to þe croune of Engleland, for3af ham unto the Scottes for evermore, by his charter ensealede.”

previous chapter, the female figures are usually consistent in their actions. That is, they are either portrayed consistently as good or as wicked. However, as Isabelle continues to exert influence over the king and the country, the *Brut* suggests that this is a tragic event not only for the country, but also for the queen herself, and that this is of her own doing. In order to support her large retinue, she usurps the king's right of purveyance for her own ends, wasting the resources that should be Edward's. The *Brut* then notes "þo bigan þe communitie of Engeland forto hate Isabel þe Quene, þat so miche louede her when she come aȝein forto purusue the false traitoures þe Spensers fro Fraunce."⁵⁴ Indeed, it is the "community of England" (led by Henry of Lancaster) that demands that the Queen cease these activities, at which point Isabella responds by swearing by God's names "full angrely" and raising an army against Henry.⁵⁵

While Isabella had a clear complaint against the improper authority wielded over her husband, she comes, in turn, to exercise that same excess over her own son. The *Brut* stresses the illegality as well as the self-centeredness of her actions, taken for her own financial gain and against the consent of any lords in parliament. In this manner, she is similar to Albina, who begins as a wonderfully beautiful princess and then becomes prideful, haughty, and ultimately tyrannical. By the later fourteenth century, then, the common thread of England's historical narrative had come to associate questions of overlordship and sovereignty with concerns over proper governance. Even though these concerns are unified in Isabelle, I am not suggesting that Isabelle represents "another Albina," in much the same way that Albina's employment in earlier histories was not as a simple proxy for the land of Britain. Rather, Isabella represents the evolution of these themes, notably the emphasis on

⁵⁴ Brie, *The Brut*, 257.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 260.

counsel for proper governance, which has gone from being the advice of barons to a vision of parliament as the “communitie of Engeland.” When Edward III comes into his own authority, Mortimer is punished for his treasonous actions with execution. The damage done by Isabella is also corrected: Edward takes the Queen’s lands into his own control, and he quickly wins back the homage of the Scots, which had been lost, the chronicle reminds its readers, through Isabella’s counsel.

The Extended and Abbreviated versions of the *Brut* also took new interest in the figure of Isabella, inserting a letter that she sent to the citizens of London after landing in England. The letter, which also appeared in copies of the Anglo-Norman *Brut*, sought the allegiance of the city of London against the Despensers. In it, Isabella presents herself as the defender of royal privilege as well as national stability, promising that the invaders “ne thenke not to done if hit like God eny thyng but that shal be for the comon profite of al þe realme.”⁵⁶ Within the English *Brut*, however, this insertion only serves to contrast Isabella’s promises with the offenses she commits against the realm’s rulers and citizens. The chronicle initially presents the Londoners as attendant to her request, a detail that makes their transition to hating the queen all the more evident in the later chapters.

The community of the realm plays an even more important role during the reign of Richard II as both a source of stability and of turmoil. The third year of Richard’s reign saw popular uprisings in Essex and Kent, the result of a poll tax instituted by Parliament. The *Brut* describes the tax as deleterious to “all communalitee of the realm,” since the Kentish rebels sacked the city of London, held the King hostage in the Tower of London, and

⁵⁶ Matheson, *PB*, 62-63.

destroyed prisons, books, and records of government.⁵⁷ The revolt was ended in the *Brut* not by King Richard II himself, but by the Mayor of London, William Walworth, along with the aldermen and commons of the city, who went with the king to hear the rebels demands.

During the meeting

þe lordes, and þe Mayre and þe Aldermen, with þe communalite, having indignacion of his [Jack Straw's] Covetise and Falsnesse, and his fowle presompcion; and anon William Walworth, þat time being Mayre, drew out his knyff, and slow Iak Straw.⁵⁸

The *Brut* relates that Walworth was later knighted by the king, who remained in the city until it was pacified.

Later on in his reign, however, the *Brut* relates another uprising, this time by Richard II's counselors (including Henry of Bolingbroke, later Henry IV), who hold their own Parliament in the interests of ending the "myschif, and misgovernaunce, and þe falsnesse of the Kinge's counsell."⁵⁹ The situation deteriorates over the succeeding years, until the murder of the Duke of Gloucester en route to Calais brings matters to a head. Richard II punished the conspirators at what became known as the "Great Parliament." The *Brut* relates the episode as an exercise in royal governance, albeit with an undertone of worry. In detailing the array of all the lords and their entourages, the *Brut* notes that Richard II had sought out a large company of Cheshire archers to be his trusted bodyguards, and he ultimately betrayed that trust. The Londoners, perhaps also nervous that the Parliament will not go as planned, post guards and archers all over the city. As with Edward II before him, it is Parliament and the lords of England who finally depose Richard II, in favor of Henry IV.

⁵⁷ Brie, *The Brut*, 336.

⁵⁸ Brie, *The Brut*, 337.

⁵⁹ Brie, *The Brut*, 342.

By the end of the fourteenth century, then, Parliament had become the means of expressing and subverting royal authority in the *Brut*, and those changes had worked their way back into Britain's ancient history. The histories of Geoffrey and Wace had included many examples of poor governance, and of kings who failed because of it. By emphasizing the breaks in the line of British kings, and, more importantly, by stating that the Britons chose their kings, the *Brut* presented a narrative where improper governance could be corrected not by divine will or fate, but by a people who would not tolerate the damage improper rule brought with it.

The fifteenth-century redactions of Britain's origin story remained faithful to the outline established by Geoffrey of Monmouth, but their similarities mask subtle changes in form, and a wide range of possibilities for reading. The history of upheaval, turmoil, and the fears of weak governance and foreign invasion were no longer, if ever, the sole property of the Britons. Rather, they belonged to Britain itself. The prophecies of Merlin, or their fourteenth-century adaptations, now united a sequence of Norman kings to their British antecedents, just as conquest linked the present kings with their imagined ancestors. If stability could be brought to Britain through wise governance and military might, it was more apparent than ever that that stability could never be more than a temporary arrangement. Briton, Saxon, Roman, and Norman were unified not by their ancestry, but through their subjection to Fortune's whims. Readers need not look to Arthurian times to find examples of deposed monarchs. They saw the consequences of such upheaval in their own.

Conclusion: Anecdotal Evidence and the Wider Worlds of Historical Reading

The activities of London's professional scribes has become a source of increasing interest in studies of late medieval English literature, as the early proponents of this research were interested in the manuscript traditions of Chaucer, Gower, and Lydgate. Yet these scribes did not exclusively produce literature, writing literary manuscripts in connection with many other genres, history chief among them.⁶⁰ They also suggest that these manuscripts could be produced and sold speculatively, blurring the lines between what had been seen as the more bespoke tradition of manuscript production and the production of printed texts which was to follow later in the century.⁶¹

Osborn's manuscript of the *Brut*, Lambeth Palace MS 491, provides an excellent example of this process at work, since it does not only contain the *Brut*. The manuscript goes on for another eighty folia and includes copies of three other Middle English devotional and romance texts, notably the *Three Kings of Cologne*, which detailed the journey of the Magi to Jerusalem and back, the *Siege of Jerusalem*, which related the destruction of the city by the Roman Emperors Titus and Vespasian, and two Arthurian poems. Another manuscript composed around the same time, now in the Huntington Library, contains a copy of Mandeville's *Travels* supplemented with details from the *Three Kings*, as well as a corrected copy of *Troilus and Criseyde*.⁶² In his translation in Lambeth 491, Osborn incorporated an additional poem about St. Helena from his source, preserving the original Latin text for the verse. Osborn's manuscripts, then, reveal a willingness to adapt and compile the content that

⁶⁰ One of Osborn's contemporaries in the Guildhall, John Marchaunt, was also involved in the production of both literature and history, copying another early *Brut*, now Rylands, MS Eng 106. Mooney and Stubbs, *Scribes and the City*, 38.

⁶¹ Matheson and Mooney, "Beryn Scribe," 363-66.

⁶² Huntington, MS HM 114. The interpolation in *Mandeville* can be found on fols. 190-192v.

he wanted, in a multitude of languages. If Osborn, as well as others, read the texts in Lambeth 491 as a unit, what uses might they have found for England's history?

A good deal of scholarly debate surrounds the reading of texts within anthologies and miscellanies as connected. Even with clear indication (e.g., cross references in the same hand) that a reader was actively making connections between two works, these investigations are speculative and often limited to very small audiences.⁶³ In the case of these texts, however, I believe it is necessary to try for several reasons. First and foremost, although such texts as the *Siege of Jerusalem* and *the Three Kings* are studied as vernacular literature, they can be found in compilations that contain histories.⁶⁴

When examined in connection with the rubrication of the *Brut*, Osborn's book shows that Britain's Christian history could be brought to bear on the translation of the *Three Kings*. The chapters on Lucius, Constantine, and the emergence of Christianity, call attention not only to the division of Britain's church, but also to the activities of St. Helena.⁶⁵ While Osborn's version of the *Brut* omits the detail that St. Helena had discovered the True Cross, other versions of the history do not. The poem Osborn preserved from his Latin source praised Helena precisely for her discovery of the Cross, so it, along with the sections of the *Three Kings* which related Helena's discovery and transport of their relics, may have been called to Osborn's mind in association with England's history, or vice versa.

⁶³ Boffey and Thompson, "Anthologies and Miscellanies," 290-95; D. Pearsall, "The Whole Book: Late Medieval Manuscript Miscellanies and their Modern Interpreters," in *Imagining the Book*, ed. S. Kelly and J. Thompson (Turnhout: Brepols, 2005), 17-29, esp. 22-23; S. Lerer, "Bibliographical Theory and the Textuality of the Codex: Toward a History of the Premodern Book," in *The Medieval Manuscript Book*, 17-33.

⁶⁴ Four other *Brut* manuscripts contain the *Three Kings*, and Latin histories offered even closer parallels to works like the *Siege of Jerusalem*. See J. Boffey, "'Many grete myraclys... in divers contreys of the eest': the Reading and Circulation of the Middle English Prose 'Three Kings of Cologne,'" in *Medieval Women: Texts and Contexts in Late Medieval Britain, Essays for Felicity Riddy*, ed. J. Wogan-Browne et al. (Turnhout: Brepols, 2000), 35-47.

⁶⁵ Lambeth Palace MS 491, fol. 15r.

Osborn's use of the *Three Kings* to fill a gap in MS HM 114 also illustrates how information about the Holy Land might have linked the books in his mind. Both the *Three Kings* and Mandeville's *Travels* narrate the events of sacred history from a geographical perspective, describing its spread through the world, with the *Three Kings* emphasizing Christ's birth and Mandeville focusing on his passion. Mandeville's *Travels* also mentioned Helena as the mother of Constantine in connection with her discovery of the True Cross and describe Arabia as the domain of one of the Magi.⁶⁶ In other words, there would be sufficient overlap between these texts for Osborn to know that information about Egypt (missing in his copy of Mandeville) could be drawn in from the *Three Kings*.

Moving towards the mid-fifteenth century, two additional manuscript compilations illustrate how different themes could be brought in to augment the content and appearance of the *Brut*. The first of these is Oxford, Bodleian MS Rawlinson B.216. Originally, this manuscript contained three main texts: a copy of the *Brut* to 1419, a copy of John Mandeville's *Travels*, and the proverbs of Solomon.⁶⁷ The rubricated introduction to Mandeville in this copy, however, has been modified by the scribe to include specific references to Constantine the Great along with Prester John.⁶⁸ The passages on St. Helena and the True Cross contain an interesting error, corrected by a later reader. It reads "This Eleyne was the modir of /Constantinus\ Constans emperor of Rome. And she was the kynges daughter of Ingelonde. And Engeland was tho cleped the mor' Bretayne, the whiche Emper^{or} when he was there took to his wife for here grete farenesse."⁶⁹ Either the scribe or his copy-text realized that Mandeville was conflating two figures: Constans, the husband of

⁶⁶ HM 114, fol. 138r-39v.

⁶⁷ See Maddan, *Summary Catalogue* 11568. The manuscript is composed in two different, contemporary hands, with a sixteenth-century hand adding a copy of John Lydgate's *Life of St. Edmund*.

⁶⁸ Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Rawlinson B. 216, fol. 131r.

⁶⁹ *ibid.* fol. 132r.

Helena, who had married her for her fairness (as the *Brut* related) and Constantine, her son and the more important figure of the two, who was the emperor of Rome.⁷⁰ The error, as well as its correction by a later reader, might thus be ascribed to readings of the history contained in the *Brut*.

The second example is strikingly different in both the text it incorporates and the level of expense that went into it. Oxford, Bodleian MS Laud Misc. 733 is a large folio work, written on vellum in a consistent hand and lavishly illuminated. The book consists of two separate texts, the *Brut*, which continues to 1419, and a Middle English translation of Johannes de Bado Aureo's *De Arte Heraldica*, a Latin text composed at the end of the fourteenth century.⁷¹ Johannes' treatise describes the principal colors and insignia found on arms, along with the attributes ascribed to them. The accompanying *Brut* also appears as a customized and elaborate production. It is thought to draw from at least two separate exempla and contains several detailed miniatures reflecting events within the history, as well as illustrations of figures in the margins bearing arms. Even though no early patron is named or identified with the manuscript, it would not be a stretch to assume that this production was specially requested for presentation or for personal use, and that the texts would, separately, satisfy the desire of a noble patron for heraldry and vernacular history.⁷²

Of the four illuminated miniatures in the manuscript, two concern the legendary history of England, and within the book, armature adds an additional dimension to the

⁷⁰ Bodleian MS Rawlinson B.216, fol. 10r.

⁷¹ The *De Arte Heraldica* precedes the *Brut*, running from fols. 1r-18v.

⁷² Matheson, *PB*, 266. C. Meale, "Patrons, Buyers, and Owners: Book Production and Social Status," in *Book Production and Publishing in Britain 1375-1475*, ed. J. Griffiths and D. Pearsall (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 201-38.

history of England.⁷³ In the first miniature, which begins the work, King Diocletian gives his daughters (with Albina labeled in the foreground) in marriage to a group of kings. Below, the sisters disembark onto the island. One sister ministers to Albina, while another forages in the forest. Behind a row of trees lie two giants, possibly corresponding to a detail in the prologue where the names of two of the giants are given in rubric.⁷⁴ The miniature, then, provides a quick summary of the entire narrative.

Once the Britons arrive on the island, another miniature depicts Corineus wrestling with the giant Gogmagog, hurling him over a cliff while Brutus, his wife Immogen, and his troops look on.⁷⁵ As in the Albina miniature, a number of small details are present, but these take on a greater relevance to arms. Brutus is shown bearing a blue shield with three golden crowns arranged vertically, representing the three kingdoms of England, Scotland, and Wales. Corineus is depicted in a black (sable) robe with golden bezants, adopting the heraldic symbol of Cornwall. In the background, a giant, a dragon, and a lion are engaged in combat with each other. While the presence of the giant is unclear, the lion and the dragon may further symbolize the two realms of England and Scotland. These same crowns, albeit on a red background, will later be carried by the figure of Arthur.⁷⁶ The design of these miniatures, then, draws upon knowledge of the *Brut* and of the heraldic symbols of the time, claiming visually what the early narrative of the British kings set out in writing.

The final miniature makes the armorial connection even more explicit. The image depicts the battle between William the Conqueror and Harold Godwinson, at its decisive moment. William, robed in blue and gold, impales Harold with a lance, while his soldiers do

⁷³ It is possible that more may have been included. The manuscript is missing two sections of text within the reigns of Lear and Arthur.

⁷⁴ Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Laud Misc 733, fol. 18r.

⁷⁵ Bodleian MS Laud Misc 733, fol. 22v.

⁷⁶ *ibid.*, fol. 42r.

battle with the Saxons. While the text of the episode is consistent with the *Brut*, a rubricated heading identifies the miniature, calling attention to the death of Harold, but also to the arms of the families that fought with William.⁷⁷ The compiler places another tantalizing detail in the background of the frame. In between the victorious William and the vanquished Harold, a wolf carries the limp body of a bird, possibly an owl or a falcon. Both birds are described negatively in *De Arte Heraldica*, as either cowardly and underhanded (the owl) or brave beyond their abilities (the falcon).⁷⁸ This expansion is as imaginative as it is visually striking—coats of arms were not established at the time of William the Conqueror, but the representation of the figures in the manuscript relates to the fifteenth-century use of arms, and, in the case of Corineus' dress, to recent adaptations in armorial design. Likewise, the animals in the image reinforce the text's portrayal of Harold as a dishonest and cunning man who foolishly fought William with too small an army and paid for his pride with his life.

While an emphasis on heraldic imagery unifies the texts within the Laud manuscript, the production of the *Brut* cannot be said to have been a direct expansion of the English *de Arte Heraldica*, or vice versa. None of the elaborately painted shields found in the first folios of the treatise are simple copies of the shields that later appear in the *Brut*, and no overt references to the history of Britain can be found in the text. Rather, the illustrator, and likely the reader as well, could use the knowledge of heraldry and imagery to enrich the reading of history, adding symbolism, for example, to the saints shown displaying shields within the

⁷⁷ "Of the shewyng in picture of the bataille how duke william faught with king harolde and of divers of tho lordes that come with hym in therre armes that is to saie Mortimer Percy Furnyvale Nevyll Latymer Scrope Lovell Talbot Saffet Montagu Veer and other." MS Laud Misc 733, fol. 70r.

⁷⁸ *ibid.*, fols.8v and 70v.

volume.⁷⁹ The two texts in MS Laud Misc 733 could be read independently, but a knowledge of one would certainly aid in the understanding of the other.

In all of these manuscripts, no attempts have been made to explicitly link their contents through annotation, and even if there had been, such annotations usually offer few clues as to the interpretations of readers.⁸⁰ The point I wish to make most clearly is not that all of these texts became “historical” when bound (or written) together with histories in books. I instead argue that the different valences that Britain’s early history could take—political, legal, and religious—could ally themselves with different interests in the minds of their readers. The individual figures within the *Brut* were linked by the chronicle’s sparse narrative, but taken individually, as exempla or anecdotes, they became points where other information could be collected. The miniatures in Laud Misc 733, for example, not only serve to indicate the class or presumed economic status of the manuscript’s owner, but also offer suggestions of how readers might flesh out the detail in chronicle narratives. The converse is also true. A reader might be reminded of an “historical” Arthur by reading about his romance counterpart, or consider the history of Troy a point of departure for both the story of Brutus and the story of *Troilus and Criseyde*. As the number of texts surrounding the history of England multiplied, so too did the number of applications for the details its readers learned from the *Brut*, and the variety of resonances the text would have going forward.

When considering the details and themes which could be extracted from the *Brut*, scholars should not neglect the topics that could also be brought to bear upon the text, situating it in the mind of its reader. The chronicle narrative of the *Brut* provided a number

⁷⁹ Bodleian MS Laud Misc 733, fols. 29r, (Constantine) 30v, (St. Ursula) and 31r (St. Alban).

⁸⁰ For example, through cross-referencing, rubrication, or other non-verbal linking marks.

of compact episodes, encapsulating a single event or moral virtues into the reign of particular kings or queens. These episodes were strung together in the chronicle narrative, but similar stories could appear in other genres of literature, or, in the case of the story of the Three Kings, as part of cycles of public performance during the liturgical year. Different sources of information, then, might lead a reader back to their history, or lead them to read history for the first time. The chronicles in these books, like the history within them, does not admit a single reading or meaning but rather stand as a framework, a point of connection, for the many different uses, and readings, of the past in late medieval England.

Chapter Four

Expansion and Expression: Interpreting the Early History of Britain in the Fifteenth Century

London, British Library MS Sloane 2027 is an editor's nightmare. It contains at least two distinct codicological sections and, depending on the definition, seven distinct texts.¹ The second section contains a narrative of England's history from Albina up to the beginning of Henry IV's reign in 1399. Albina's story, in Middle English prose combines elements of the Latin *De origine gigantum* (beginning with a date and setting the story in Greece) with the Albina storyline found in the Prose *Brut*. Following this, the manuscript contains a copy of Robert of Gloucester's *Metrical Chronicle*, which traces the descent of Brutus back to Adam through the Trojans and continues to the beginning of Henry III's reign in 1216. A copy of the prose *Brut* then takes over, narrating from the reign of King John down to the end of Richard II's reign, but abbreviating much of the detail found in the prose chronicle. Both booklets date from the early to mid-fifteenth century, and they were read together, at least by the end of the century, as evidence from the manuscript's owners indicates. Sloane 2027 is a messy text — it defies study as part of a single tradition, or even within a single time period. Does it “count” as a copy of the *Metrical Chronicle*, a “defective” copy of the Middle English *Brut*, or a miscellaneous volume of historical and political poetry and prose? In other words, was a reader of MS Sloane 2027 reading one book, or many?

¹ The first part of the manuscript, running from fols 1-95r, contains a translation of Vegetius' *De re militari*, a treatise on household management called *The Book of Nurture*, and John Lydgate and Benedict Burgh's *Secrets of Old Philosophers*. See Matheson, PB 274-75. It is possible that the first part dates from a later period than the second. The manuscript is on paper, and similar watermarks can be found in both sections, however, the first booklet is rubricated and laid out in a different style than the second.

Two and a half centuries after the writing of the *Historia Regum Britanniae*, the narrative of Britain's earliest kings had evolved significantly in its use and interpretation. As the previous chapters demonstrate, by adapting the story of Albina and her murderous sisters into the narrative, fourteenth-century historians presented the territory of Britain as complete, yet transferrable by conquest. In this way, they built upon a line of interpretation advanced by Wace, adding important and long-lasting ramifications for the question of female authority in the character of Albina. Edward II's troubled succession had provided kindling for this particular historiographical fire; the tumultuous reign of Henry VI fueled it further. Henry's majority was characterized by successive crises of authority, as bouts of illness debilitated the king and left a power vacuum filled by Henry's barons and his wife, Margaret of Scotland.

These difficulties made the core message of Britain's early history—the instability inherent in the land of England and its monarchy—clearly relevant, while the increasing volume of manuscript production of the fifteenth century brought that message to more readers than ever before. At the same time, the episodic nature of the *Brut's* chapters made the text apt for multiple readings and reading strategies. The fifteenth-century manuscripts of the *Brut* provided a framework of succession and disruption within Britain from at least the time of Albina to the reign of Henry V. Individual scribes and compilers expanded upon that framework, enriching the history at all points, not just the most recent, and they used varied genres of literature in multiple languages in recombination. The Middle English *Brut* did, indeed, develop and evolve over the course of the fifteenth century, but the drivers of this evolution were not exclusively Middle English texts.

The most fluid part of the *Brut*'s development, not coincidentally, occurred during the reign of Henry VI and the civil and baronial strife that ensued. The versions of the *Brut* that end in 1419 appear to have been written during the minority rule of Henry VI, and their role in glorifying the deeds of Henry V has received the most notice, along with a Lancastrian bias in the chronicle's narrative of later events.² The *Brut* narrative to 1419 had ended on a high note with Henry V's defeat of the French at Agincourt and his subsequent capture of Rouen, yet even as it was being written, it must have been apparent to the chronicle's writers and readers that England's fortunes were undergoing a reversal.

At the end of Matheson's *Prose Brut*, he designates a number of *Brut* manuscripts which do not conform completely to his descriptive categories as "Peculiar Texts and Versions."³ Many of these works draw upon other chronicles, in English and in Latin, for their narrative of English history past 1419. Still others contain pieces of the *Brut* mixed in and around other texts. At various points, scholars have considered the "miscellaneous" nature of these works as either a sign of the piecemeal and, at times, uncritical practice of medieval scribes, or as a textual defect and a cause for exclusion from a critical canon.⁴ For the historian, however, these manuscripts reveal valuable information about the shape of historical learning and reading in England. Particularly if the field of investigation is broadened past the boundaries of one text to an entire book—its margins, illustrations, annotations, and, in these cases, other works—we arrive at a better understanding of how the history of England contained in the *Brut* was not only "popular," as measured by the

² See, for example, W. Marx, "Reception and Revision in the Middle English Prose *Brut*," *Trivium* 36 (2006): 53-69.

³ Matheson, *PB*, 256-334. The historical material in these manuscripts is mostly in Middle English, and in this chapter I will refer to them as "Peculiar *Bruts*," in contrast to the Latin *Bruts* discussed in connection with them.

⁴ See R. Hanna, "Authorial Versions, Rolling Revision, Scribal Error? Or, The Truth about *Truth*," in idem., *Pursuing History: Middle English Manuscripts and their Texts* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1996), 159-73.

number of copies that survive, but pervasive in the social and intellectual strata that the history penetrated.⁵

This chapter, as well as the one which follows, will make use of the “Peculiar *Bruts*,” along with texts not categorized as Middle English *Bruts*, to provide evidence of three such expansions in historical reading and historical thought. The remainder of this chapter explores the intersections between the Middle English and Latinate historical traditions, while the following chapter examines how other genres of literature could augment the reading of history in individual manuscripts and printed books. Both of these influences inflected and expanded the reading of history in late medieval England, popular as well as scholarly, and were further promoted by the activities of England’s early printers. While the chapters are separated for clarity, both influences can be found in the peculiar manuscripts of the Middle English *Brut*, and sometimes in the same book. Together, they represent a first step towards distilling not one, but several interlocking approaches to the past out of the many texts which were called *Bruts* in fifteenth-century England.

I. Reverse Engineering: Latin *Bruts* and Their Composition

Alongside the manuscripts of the Middle English Prose *Brut* exist a smaller number of fifteenth-century Latin texts which narrate the history of Britain from Albina (or earlier) through the reign of Henry VI. These manuscripts are usually referred to as “Latin *Bruts*,” and as a group they are even more varied in their contents than the Middle English “Peculiar

⁵ For a first foray into the Peculiar *Bruts*, see W. Marx, “Peculiar Versions of the Middle English Prose *Brut* and Textual Archaeology,” in *The Prose Brut and Other Late Medieval Chronicles: Books Have Their Histories*, ed. J. Rajsic, D. Hoche, and E. Kooper (Woodbridge: York Medieval Press, 2016), 94-104.

Bruts.”⁶ At their core, all of them contain a Latin adaptation of a vernacular *Brut* chronicle—either the short Anglo-Norman version or, more commonly, the Middle English *Brut* to 1419—augmented with other Latin works.⁷ Over the course of the fifteenth century, the Latin *Bruts*, or portions of them, were translated back into English, resulting in an “extended family” of chronicles whose interrelations are as loose as medieval translation practices themselves.⁸

From the twentieth century onward, the Latin *Brut* has been considered as a less interesting offshoot of the Middle English tradition. Kingsford identified eleven manuscripts that he called Latin *Bruts* but, as with his study of the Middle English *Brut*, he only considered the fifteenth-century portions of the chronicle to be relevant for historians.⁹ In his view, the only particularly noteworthy aspect of these texts was the fact that Latinate readers would have bothered to translate a Middle English original in the first place.¹⁰ He divided the manuscripts into two groups, depending on their treatment of Henry V’s reign, and printed the fifteenth-century portions of both groups as an appendix. To date, Kingsford’s text remains the only part of the Latin *Brut* to have been edited, which has, we shall see, caused the Latin *Brut* manuscripts to be seen as more diverse and miscellaneous than they actually are.

⁶ See E. D. Kennedy and P. Larkin, “Prose Brut Chronicle, Latin” in *The Encyclopedia of the Medieval Chronicle*, vol. II (hereafter *EMC II*), ed. G. Dunphy (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 1240-41 for the most complete list to date.

Varying assessments of the chronicle are given in Matheson, *Prose Brut*, 37-47.

⁷ Four fourteenth- or early fifteenth-century manuscripts were identified as translations of the Anglo-Norman Short Version, supplemented after 1066. The remainder are unified by a narrative that ends with the death of James of Scotland, although some individual texts continue past this point with the aid of other sources. *EMC II*, 1240.

⁸ R. Blumenfeld-Kosinski, “Introduction: The Middle Ages,” in *The Politics of Translation in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*, ed. *idem et al.* (Ottawa: University of Exeter Press, 2001), 17-27, 25.

⁹ Kingsford, *English Historical Literature*, 129-130 and 310-312.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 130.

In his study of Prose *Brut* manuscripts, Lister Matheson posited that the Latin text was composed using the narrative structure of the English *Brut*, but contained extra information freely adapted from other works, notably Ranulf Higden's monumental fourteenth-century synthesis of English and Biblical history, the *Polychronicon*.¹¹ He identified nineteen full and partial manuscripts of the Latin *Bruts*, and his caveat that there were almost certainly more has proven to be true. The most recent summary of the manuscripts lists twenty-four copies, and my research has identified an additional manuscript of the Latin *Brut*: London, Lambeth Palace MS 493, as well as three other strong contenders, which I have not been able to examine at this time but whose incipits and given titles match those of other known Latin *Bruts*.¹² When the Middle English versions that drew upon or inspired Latin texts are taken into account, forty manuscripts fall into this loose category.

In the versions of the Latin *Brut* that continue to the fifteenth century, the early history of England contains several notable features, the first of which occurs in the Albina story and the pre-Trojan history in the text.¹³ As in the Latin *De origine gigantum*, Albina is introduced as the daughter of an unnamed king of Greece. The text does not dwell upon the dramatic aspects of the narrative, and no direct speech is present.¹⁴ Rather, the episode introduces the giants to the island and foregrounds their conquest by Brutus. Immediately following Albina, the narrative also extends Brutus' genealogy through the Trojans to

¹¹ Matheson, *PB*, 46.

¹² *EMC II*, 1240-41. Although the entry mentions twenty-six items, two are unrelated chronicles that were at one time called "Latin Bruts" by the scholars who worked with them. See also E. Kooper, "Longleat House 55," 79-85. London, Lambeth Palace 493 is a copy of the chronicle to 1437 with a short life of Henry V, and the catalogue identifies Cambridge, University Library MS Mm.5.20 as the same text with a different ending. See M.R. James, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Manuscripts in Lambeth Palace Library: The Mediaeval Manuscripts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1932), 684-85. Oxford, MS Rawlinson B.167 is identified as a part of the "Nova Chronica Ricardi Rede," a title shared by Lambeth Palace MS 493 and three other Latin *Brut* manuscripts. Oxford, MS Bodley 506 is also identified as a "Nova Chronica," and whose incipit and end date match the description of the Latin *Brut*. See Maddan, *Summary Catalogue*, vol. II pt. I, 241.

¹³ A short overview is given in Matheson, *PB*, 42-45.

¹⁴ See above, Chapter 2, pp. 93-98.

Dardanus, and from there either to Jupiter or to Adam, but it focuses on Brutus' exile from Greece, his arrival on Albion, and his foundation of New Troy (London).

After that, the narrative proceeds briskly, with a chapter dedicated to each early British king, until the conquest of Britain by Julius Caesar. The purpose of these chapters is often solely to establish succession, although in the main group of texts the narrative dwells upon the key stories from Britain's early history: Brutus and his sons, Lear's loss of his kingdom, the first law codes established in Britain, Brenne and Belin's conquest of Rome, and the battles between the Britons under Cassibelan and the Romans under Julius Caesar. After that, the Christian history of Britain becomes the focal point, beginning with King Lucius' conversion in 177 CE. Additional interpolations include notices of the conquest of Jerusalem by Titus and Vespasian, the martyrdom of St. Alban, and the arrival in Britain of Joseph of Arimathea, bearing two vials containing the blood and sweat of Christ.¹⁵ After the Britons are banished from the island, the chronicle gives a summary of the Britons' detailed division of the Heptarchy (the seven kingdoms of Anglo-Saxon England) before continuing on. In some manuscripts, the narrative is broken at the Norman Conquest by a gloss that reads "Explicit de Bruto."¹⁶ Unfortunately, since many of these textual features have been considered "extraneous" to the tradition of the *Brut* or the chronicle tradition more generally, they have reinforced the idea of the Latin *Brut* as a series of *ad hoc* compilations tied together by a fifteenth-century continuation, rather than a group of texts that share a complex vision of Britain's origins.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ Matheson identifies the omission of Merlin's prophecies as a defining characteristic of the Latin *Brut*, but (as with Wace's *Brut*) some compilations appear to have had these works reinserted. See J. Luxford, "A Previously Unlisted Manuscript of the Latin Brut Chronicle with Sherbourne Continuation," *Medium Aevum* 71.2 (2002): 286-93, and the discussion of MS HM 19960 below, pp. 164-66.

Much remains to be studied regarding the textual variations of the Latin *Brut*, and I hope to undertake more of this work in the future. For the moment, it may be said that while the early portions of the chronicle underwent considerable compression from the vernacular versions of the Prose *Brut*, still further from the narratives of Wace and Geoffrey of Monmouth, this compression should not be taken to mean that the early narrative was less relevant than the later portions of the history, as Kingsford argued. The compression of much of the early reigns serves two critical functions within the Latin and English narratives. It calls attention to the portions of Britain's early history which offered moral or political example, and it serves to provide a complete, if not continuous, history of England from the time that human beings appeared on Earth.

Because of their varied contents, individual manuscripts of the Latin *Brut* have been considered in isolation, apart not only from the Middle English *Brut* tradition, but also from the other Latin *Bruts*. As a whole, these texts shed particular light on the expanding variety of historical material that was coalescing around the story of Brutus and his descendants in the fifteenth century, as well as the various audiences who were committed to expanding the history. Several of these manuscripts have connections to religious houses, including Glastonbury Abbey, and on their basis it has been speculated that the Latin *Brut* may have provided a "ready-made, essentially secular" chronicle which could be used and personalized by religious houses.¹⁷ Others were owned by members of the English court, in particular by a group coalescing around Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, uncle and tutor to Henry VI. Humphrey's circle was responsible for the production of texts that might be called humanist in their approach to revising older works and the presence of Italian scholars in their midst. Thus, these manuscripts have the potential to not only shed light on a wider swath of

¹⁷ Luxford, "Unlisted Manuscript," 293.

English society, but also to demonstrate that a broad range of scholarly and cultural influence was being brought to bear on a “popular” chronicle.¹⁸

The question of whether the term “English Humanism” has any meaning, particularly in relation to the activities of Humphrey and his contemporaries in the early fifteenth century, has long been a matter of contention.¹⁹ While Humphrey and other notable members of the English court had imported Italian scholars during Henry VI’s minority, including such notable humanist book hunters as Poggio Bracciolini, these men found the intellectual climate and resources of England remarkably infertile. In what remains the most influential work on the subject to date, Roberto Weiss offered a more favorable view of the activities of Humphrey and his contemporaries, but he too ultimately painted the duke as a patron rather than a scholar, someone who cultivated a scholarly image for himself and for England, but whose interest in the classics trumped his intellectual curiosity or, perhaps, even his faculties.²⁰ These men may have affected and adapted the style of the classics, but they displayed none of the passion for discovery, particularly of new books and manuscripts of classical authors, that Weiss considered essential to humanism.²¹ Since the publication of Weiss’ book, the view of English humanism as “superficial,” second-rate, or unoriginal has proved lasting, even among those who wish to promote the role of English scholarship within the movement.²² More recently, Alexandra Petrina has argued that the

¹⁸ See E. D. Kennedy, “History Repeats Itself: The Dartmouth *Brut* and Fifteenth-Century Historiography,” *Digital Philology* 3 (2014): 196-214. Kennedy discusses sixteen *Nova Chronica* manuscripts, as he refers to the Latin *Brut*, as part of the process of updating the English *Brut* for a new regime following the deposition of Henry VI. See also the discussion in D. Wakelin, *Humanism, Reading, and English Literature 1430-1530* (Oxford: OUP, 2007), 62-92.

¹⁹ For a thorough overview of this debate among nineteenth and twentieth-century scholars, see A. Petrina, *Cultural Politics in Fifteenth-Century England: The Case of Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester* (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 17-58.

²⁰ R. Weiss, *Humanism in England during the Fifteenth Century* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1941).

²¹ Weiss, *Humanism*, 1.

²² Wakelin, *Humanism, Reading, and English Literature*, 23-61. David Rundle argues for a particularly minimal contribution on the part of Humphrey or the scholar he patronized, Tito Livio Frulovisi. D. Rundle, “The

comparison, implicit or explicit, to Italian humanism not only puts English thinkers on inferior ground, but also minimizes the influences of contemporary politics, religious debate, and the contributions of non-Latin languages, notably French, which she sees as characteristic of Humphrey and his successors.²³

What is more, it is clear that Duke Humphrey's literary interests, along with his political machinations, did not confine themselves to Latin texts. His patronage of poets like John Lydgate provided an element of continuity between the minority government and that of Henry V. While the extent of Humphrey's sincere involvement in intellectual pursuits remains in debate, it is clear that his activities, along with those of the courtiers and scholars that followed him, introduced a new set of materials and influences into the writing of England's history. The connections between the Latin *Bruts* and the Peculiar *Bruts*, in turn, modify Petrina's speculation that humanism, as an aristocratic pursuit, might be separable from the larger mass of "lay literature" being produced in the same period.²⁴ What is more, they demonstrate the continued evolution of historical thought in the middle decades of the fifteenth century, independent of the figure of any one individual.

Together, these *Brut* manuscripts gesture towards a climate of historical reading and writing that does not fit easily into "learned" (Latin, scholarly, or clerical) or "popular" (lay and vernacular) categories, but reflects the confluence of both. The political circumstances of England in the mid-fifteenth century may help to explain this. The attempts of Humphrey and his contemporaries to commemorate Henry V as a pious defender perpetuated the image of a monarch responsible for the most significant English military successes of recent

Unoriginality of Tito Livio Frulovisi's *Vita Henrici Quinti*," *English Historical Review* 123 (2008): 1109-31, at 1124-26.

²³ Petrina, *Cultural Politics*, 5-10 and 64-69.

²⁴ Petrina, *Cultural Politics*, 79.

memory, as well as the defense of the English church against the corruption of Lollardy.²⁵

Within this climate, material from many different genres could be freely adapted by the makers and the users of history books. The diversity of these *Bruts* provides a further asset, demonstrating that, for the readers of fifteenth-century chronicles, expansions of histories were not limited to recent continuations. Rather they could expand at all points, especially around the origins.

In the discussion that follows, I wish to focus on one key aspect of the Latin *Brut* in its fifteenth-century manuscripts: its status as an evolving compilation. The overwhelming majority of manuscripts of the Latin *Brut* are combinations of a variety of different historical texts, from chronologies and genealogies to poems and epitaphs. What is more, the sections of the Latin *Bruts* that deal with material before the Norman Conquest appear to be more varied than the narrative that follows, making this work in some ways the inversion of the vernacular *Bruts*.²⁶ However, three features appear to unite the manuscripts of the Latin *Brut*. First, these texts make an effort to expand the chronological range beyond the arrival of Albina and Brutus on the island of Albion/Britain. They employ chronology to align England's history with histories separate from it. Second, they offer a complete picture of the transfer of power between the different peoples that inhabit England, placing the Britons in a string of conquests that extends up to the house of Lancaster. Finally, the reworking of England's history within these manuscripts carries its own internal logic, in some cases bordering on rhetorical flair.

²⁵ Rundle, "Unoriginality," 1110.

²⁶ At this time, it is difficult to say how closely all manuscripts currently identified as Latin *Bruts* correspond in their early narratives, since no edition exists. I have compared the text of MSS HM 19960, Lambeth Palace MSS 99 and 493, with that of Cambridge, Corpus Christi College MS 311, identified as a Latin *Brut* by Kingsford and Matheson, as well as checked for the variations noted by Julian Luxford in his analysis of the first part of Trinity College, Cambridge MS R.7.13 ("An Unnoticed Manuscript").

Individual Latin *Bruts* expanded on the condensed narrative of British and English kings at different points, adding elements that look like poetic or historical digressions. These additions, however, were not taken without deliberation, as they serve to amplify the themes of legitimacy, law, or piety which the entire history of England was once again being called to serve. These themes were duly taken up by the compilers of Peculiar Middle English *Bruts* produced in the middle of the century, drawing the Latin and vernacular chronicles closer together.

Viewed in conjunction with the Middle English *Brut*, then, the Latin *Bruts* allow us to observe several strong trends in the writing and learning of history that intensified in both the Latin as well as the vernacular manuscripts, and, also, in connections between manuscripts and printed books. The Latin *Brut*, as well as the Middle English manuscripts that inspired and drew upon it, represents a powerful expansion of the historical imagination in fifteenth-century England, as well as evidence that Latinate history was continuing to move beyond the walls of the monastery and the university and to circulate among a broader audience.

II. Compilation and Cosmography

What makes a Latin *Brut*? MS HM 19960, in the Huntington Library in San Marino, CA, is an excellent example of how these histories fall through the cracks of modern cataloguing and analysis. The manuscript is a rudimentary production of the mid-fifteenth century, on parchment, but in a smaller octavo format, that is, of a size similar to a modern hardback. The catalogue entry, which is more detailed than most, describes the text as an “English Historical Collection,” and lists the numerous components of the work, as well as

the possibility of its authorship by the English scholar John Tiptoft.²⁷ Numerous references to editions of its pieces, among them a “Latin *Brut* chronicle from 1399-1437,” are duly noted in the catalogue. Roberto Weiss, in what remains the most thorough examination of the manuscript to date, also referred to the book as a sum of its parts: “Rather than a chronicle it is a collection of extracts from St. Augustine, Geoffrey of Monmouth, the Metrical Life of William of Wykeham, and the 1399-1437 version of the Latin *Brut* (i.e. Printed by Kingsford in English Historical Literature).”²⁸ While Weiss was most concerned with the authorship of the manuscript and its connections to a prominent English humanist, Lister Matheson was interested in the part said to contain the Latin *Brut*. He lists MS HM 19960 as being among the texts that incorporate part of that work, but does not otherwise comment on the composite nature of the book. Since the text was in Latin rather than Middle English, he may not have examined any other part of the manuscript, if he saw it at all. After examining the book, Donald Kennedy acknowledged that parts of the Latin *Brut* could be found in the earlier sections of the manuscript, but he offered no further comment on which parts.²⁹

The enumeration of HM 19960’s parts bears directly on our current view of the work as a whole. The uniform title of “English Historical Collection” may draw directly from Weiss’ comment on the book as a collection of extracts. Weiss’ identification of the “1399-1437 version of the Latin *Brut*, in turn, drew on Kingsford’s edition, but introduces a critical flaw. For the medieval compilers of this text, there was no such thing as a “1399-1437 version of the Latin *Brut*” to draw from. That text is merely the portion of a series of

²⁷ C. Dutschke, *Guide to Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts in the Huntington Library*, 2 vols. (San Marino, CA: Huntington Library, 1989), vol. II, 618-620, 619. Kennedy dismisses this claim, arguing instead that Tiptoft was the owner, rather than the author, of the manuscript. (“History Repeats Itself,” 208-9)

²⁸ R. Weiss, *Humanism in England during the Fifteenth Century* p. 118 n. 11.

²⁹ *EMC II*, 1240. Kennedy was probably referring to the presence of the Albina story, which appears on fol. 30r.

similar Latin chronicles that Charles Kingsford felt was worth preserving, since it dealt with events in the fifteenth century.³⁰ In other words, HM19960 is not yet understood as the sum of its parts, but rather a collection of them.

The physical evidence from the manuscript argues against such a description – the main text has been written consistently in the same Anglicana bookhand, and the work has also been thoroughly annotated by a series of individuals from the time of its creation on through the sixteenth century. One of these annotations, in fact, unifies all of the components as the description of the Roman world, noting that among these, the book will treat the realm of England and the great, notable, and famous deeds of its rulers from Brutus up to Henry VI.³¹ The book's focus is the succession of England's rulers, and the guiding influence of the entire work, not just the final part, puts it squarely in line with other manuscripts of the Latin *Brut*.

The text occupying the first two quires of MS HM 19960 is called *De indagacione orbis*, a title drawn from the work's incipit, and also found on a later table of contents on the front flyleaf. The *De indagacione* provides a world geography that emphasizes the divisions of classical antiquity (i.e., the provinces of the Roman Empire) as well as religious divisions. After the threefold division of the world and a discussion of the oceans, the first half of the work focuses on the realm of Asia, mostly the Holy Land, while also providing a description of Mohamed and the religion of Islam. The second half describes Africa and Europe,

³⁰ See above, p. 157 n. 9.

³¹ “De orbis indagacione, divisione et descriptione per Iulium Cesarem in provincias et regiones factus; inter quas hic liber maxime de Regno Anglorum et Regibus eiusdem similiter A Bruto usque in Annum decimum sextum henrici sexti que magna famosa et rara sunt declarat.” (Of the judgment (?), division and description of the world into provinces and regions made by Julius Caesar, among which this book tells mostly of the Kingdom of England and the kings of the same from the time of Brutus up to the tenth year of Henry VI, those things that were most famous and rare.) Unless otherwise stated, all translations are mine and are preliminary.

moving quickly to Germania and Gaul (where it notes the descent of the Trojans from Antenor), and on to the separate territories of Ireland, Scotland, and Wales. Before arriving at Britain, where the material common to other Latin *Bruts* begins, it provides a short summary of the peoples that have inhabited the territory, modeling their successive occupations on the “five plagues” motif found in Henry of Huntingdon.³² MS 19960 is thus not only unified by the handwriting of its scribe, the “separate” texts identified by the cataloguers actually reflect a unified composition which moves from general to specific, eventually narrowing its focus to Britain. Furthermore, the *de indagacione Orbis* stresses the introduction of source material that will be found in the remainder of the history. References to outside works have been copied out in the margins of the text, with two prominent sources identified as Ranulph Higden’s *Polychronicon* and Augustine’s *City of God*.

While these glosses previously reinforced the *ad hoc* nature of the book, what follows is a distinct, but not unique, pattern of augmenting England’s history in both the Latin and the Peculiar Middle English *Bruts*. The substance of the *De indagacione* is drawn from the *Polychronicon*, and it can be found, under different titles, in two other *Brut* manuscripts. In London, Lambeth Palace MS 99, a fourteenth-century Latin *Brut* which uses the Anglo-Norman text as its source to 1066, the work is called *Cosmographia rogeri* [sic] *higden monachi cestrensis*. In London, British Library (hereafter BL) MS Royal 18.A.IX, a Middle English *Brut*, the same work has inspired an English compilation called “Primus liber chronicarum” from the headlines that run through the section.³³ These three variations on the *Polychronicon* are joined to three different texts of the *Brut* in two languages, so their compilation cannot be explained by either direct copying or translation. Furthermore, while the *De indagacione* texts

³² MS HM 19960, fol. 29v.

³³ London, Lambeth Palace MS 99, fols. 158r-186r, BL MS Royal 18.A.IX, fols. 2r-7v.

all illuminate different compilations of England's history, they also reveal a similar desire in reading it: the need for completeness of perspective as well as continuity of lineage.

The version of the *De indagacione* in Lambeth MS 99 most clearly preserves the order and features of its source. The title that the manuscript's compiler assigned to it, *Cosmographia*, gives a sense of its role within the Lambeth MS 99. Lambeth MS 99 contains eight other items in addition to the Latin *Brut*, and all of them except one link expanses of territory to the peoples who inhabit them or rulers who control them: English/British kings, Popes, Roman emperors, and Archbishops of Canterbury. Within this compilation, the *Cosmographia* follows a description of the bishoprics of the Roman Church, and then proceeds to divide the world into its parts before finishing with the British monarchy. A short summary of the English kings and the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms is attached.³⁴ The excerpting, then, provides a more detailed description of the division of the world, hence its christening *Cosmographia*, but within this description, it moves to a summary of England's rulers, primates and privileges which the other texts expand upon.

The English version of the text in BL MS Royal 18.A.IX is still more varied. The text in this manuscript appears under the Latin heading "Primus Liber Chronicarum," and it conforms in its basic outline, like the *De indagacione*, to the first book of the *Polychronicon*. It is neither a clear translation of the *Polychronicon*, nor the texts in MS HM 19960, nor Lambeth MS 99, nor is it a copy of any known English translation of the work. Instead, the first part of Royal 18.A.X provides a condensed, but linear narrative of the geographical elements of world history. As with the *De indagacione*, the text skips the lengthy excerpts from older historians that Higden inserted into the *Polychronicon*, but some of these references are copied

³⁴ Ibid. fol. 181v.

out in the marginal gloss that runs the length of the text. Even though neither of these texts is a direct copy of the other - the Latin version hews more closely to the *Polychronicon* in length and wording than the English version in Royal 18.A.IX --both suggest a similar “universal” approach to the context for English history based on an awareness of the *Polychronicon*. Thus, three unique compilations suggest that the impulse to place England’s history within the context of the wider world was common to readers of Latin and vernacular chronicles alike, and that those readers had a similar understanding of how to find the information they wanted.

The opening of the *Brut* text in Royal 18.A.IX also contains another short summary, this one more relevant to the history of England, in the form of a “kalendre,” or exordium, common to a number of other fifteenth-century *Brut* manuscripts.³⁵ The short exordium introduces the work as “a book called Brut of England” and notes, in its full form, the function of chronicles in commemorating the past. It also promises to commemorate the lives and acts of the 130 kings that had reigned in England between the arrival of Brutus and the reign of Henry VI. These opening chapters could function to advertise the presence of the anonymous *Brut* chronicles, both to a reading public in general and within the specific books that contained the *Brut*. However, this exordium also provided authorization of the work, linking it to the venerable ancient chronicle tradition, and in the case of Royal 18.A.IX, placing the scope of the *Brut* within the larger context of world geography and history, with a better understanding of England’s history as the ultimate goal.

Within MS HM 19960, however, material from the *Polychronicon* is wrapped around the narrative structure of the Latin *Brut*, beginning with the *De indagacione*. As in Lambeth 99,

³⁵ Matheson, *Prose Brut*, 212.

the text serves to provide a more complete picture of England's place in the world, but once the narrative arrives at the description of "Britannia," the compiler of HM 19960 begins the *Brut*, which then guides the narrative down to the expulsion of the Britons. Before turning to the description of the Heptarchy found in other Latin *Brut* manuscripts, the compiler of HM 19960 inserts the remainder the *De indagacione* found in Lambeth 99. Within the early history of Britain, the compiler has inserted additional information on the reigns and dates of Biblical and classical figures, further linking the geography and cosmography of the *De indagacione* to Britain's history. Thus, even though the catalogue would lead these works to be discussed separately, it is clear that they were not understood as discrete by the compiler.

A closer look at the compiler of HM 19960's editorial choices demonstrates that while the authority of the *Polychronicon* is explicitly invoked, its interpretation is subordinated to that of the *Brut*. Following the death of the last British king, Cadwallader, the compiler of MS HM 19960 inserts a passage from the *Polychronicon* containing the monarch's epitaph, the first of a succession of such borrowings.

Culmen, opes, sobolem, pollentia regna, triumphos	The lordship, riches, lineage, fruits of rule, triumphs
Eximios, proceres, moenia, castra, lares	extraordinary, lordly dwellings, fortresses and towns
Quaeque patrum virtus et quae congesserat ipse	Which his virtue and that of his fathers had amassed
Cedwall' armipotens liquit amore dei	Cedwall the mighty forsook for God's love ³⁶

The text of the Huntington manuscript then borrows from the *Polychronicon* to explain why Bede had incorrectly identified Cadwallader as Cedwall. At the end of the section, the text mentions that the Welsh still believe that they will rule again when Cadwallader's bones are returned to England, but the text dismisses the idea as a fable (*fabulosam reputo*). In the

³⁶ *ibid.*, fol. 71v, *Polychronicon*, ed. Lumby, vol. vi, 158. London, Lambeth Palace MS 99 does not contain this insertion, and other Latin *Bruts* place the epitaph within the description of the Heptarchy rulers, following the structure of the *Flores Historiarum*. See, for example, London, Lambeth Palace MS 493.

Polychronicon itself, by contrast, the fable does not stop at Wales' future fortune, but extends to the entire end of Geoffrey's *Historia*.³⁷ Cadwallader is a much more necessary figure in the *Brut*, where his abdication and death provide the transition of power from the Britons to the Saxons, than he is in the *Polychronicon*. Rather than copy the episode out verbatim, the Huntington manuscript pointedly omits the last six words of the sentence, *sicut et historiam Gaufridi in fine*, and goes on to discuss the Britons' fall from power.

However numerous the interpolations from the *Polychronicon* might have been, both within the Latin *Bruts* in general and in MS HM 19960 in particular, the historical vision of the *Polychronicon* did not override the work. It is also apparent that HM 19960 is not a compilation of excerpts from numerous histories, but rather a work with its own internal logic. Across these seemingly unique manuscripts, we observe a considered and similar approach to contextualizing English history. These three versions of the *Polychronicon*'s cosmography foreground another important feature of historical expansion—they all demonstrate how portions of larger works could be excerpted and spread across traditions, recombining to take on lives of their own.

III. Poetry

The epitaphs in MS HM 19960 point to another important area of expansion within the Latin *Brut* manuscripts: the amount of poetry that has been incorporated into the text. While the cosmographic and genealogical additions clearly add to the historical content of

³⁷ *Polychronicon*, ed. Lumby, vol. vi, 160, "Sed et opinionem Walensium qua dicunt se denuo reges rehabere cum ossa Cadwalladri a Roma fuerint reportata, fabulosam reputo, sicut et historiam Gaufridi in fine." (But I consider the Welsh opinion, in which they say that they will become kings again when the bones of Cadwallader are returned from Rome, to be a fable, just as I do the history of Geoffrey in the end.)

the Latin *Brut*, the inclusion of short verses like elegiac couplets demonstrates that the eloquence of the *Brut* could also be an area for enrichment. Epitaphs and inscriptions also had the advantage of being memorable and, thus, more likely to be incorporated into other works. Within MS 19960 these additions may also represent the growing interest in Latin poems by English readers, especially the manuscript's owner, John Tiptoft. Another Latin manuscript produced for Tiptoft, Trinity College, Dublin MS 438, contained fifteenth-century Italian translations of classical poetry on virtue and vice, as well as a series of orations to the Roman emperors.³⁸

Within the Latin *Bruts*, short verses are found in the descriptions of many other figures from early British history, typically saints and, as the history turns to the Anglo-Saxon period, epitaphs of the island's rulers. Even though different authorities are cited for these quotations, the most common source among manuscripts in this group was the *Polychronicon*. References to Higden's work occur frequently within the text of the *Brut* in MS HM 19960, but in most cases, the verses seem to have been viewed as part of a common repertoire and were incorporated as a form of commentary. For example, following the *Brut*'s account of Constantine's donation of his possessions to the Church, the compiler inserts a moral on the corrupting influence of money in the Church (*bodie infusum est venenum in ecclesia dei*) together with another short adage from St. Jerome: "*ex quo crevit possessionibus decrevit virtutibus*."³⁹ In this context, the *ex quo* in Jerome's adage might be translated as Constantine's donation, "from which [the Church] increased in possessions and decreased in virtues." In this instance, the pithy verses and their authority are of chief importance to the compiler, and the comment injects doubt into what is otherwise an example of one of Britain's most famous

³⁸ See D. Rundle, "The Circulation and Use of Humanist 'Miscellanies' in England," (Forthcoming: 2016).

³⁹ "today venom is injected into God's Church." MS HM 19960, fol. 45r.

early figures. In other Latin *Bruts*, the same epitaph may be used to describe different monarchs; Alfred the Great, Henry II, Richard I, and Arthur all have versions of an epitaph modeled on that of Alexander the Great: *sufficiat hic tumulus (or septem pedem) qui non sufficeret orbis*.⁴⁰ In each case this reflection served to both meditate on the transitory nature of worldly power and ascribe the status of a great conqueror to the monarch. The presence of this verse in so many different places argues for its wider place within the historical imagination of compilers and readers, rather than the mechanical copying or splicing of texts.

The *Polychronicon* was not the only source for poems within the Latin *Brut*. Two further manuscripts contain a series of verses inspired by the content of Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae*.⁴¹ These short verses not only highlight the deeds of Britain's early monarchs, but also commemorate such key themes within its history as the virtues of living in freedom and the connections of Brutus to his Trojan ancestors.⁴² Initially produced to summarize the narrative of Geoffrey of Monmouth, these short verses ended up supplementing it in the Latin *Brut*.

The verses were first noted in two manuscripts of the *Historia Regum Britanniae*, where they serve as marginal additions to the text. One of these books, now BL MS Cotton Cleopatra D VIII, is an early fifteenth-century production containing the Latin Albina story,

⁴⁰ "let this little tomb (or seven feet of earth) suffice him, for whom the entire world was not enough." The epitaph is most commonly found at the conclusion of Henry II's reign, e.g. in London, Lambeth Palace MS 493, fol. 65r, and BL Cotton Domitian A IV, fol. 41r. Oxford, MS Lyell 34 also has the epitaph for Henry I (rex henricus obit decus olim nunc dolor orbis / King Henry has died, the splendor of the world and now its sadness) ascribed in the margin to Henry V.

⁴¹ BL MS Harley 3906 and Cambridge, Trinity College R.7.13. The BL manuscript is thought to have served as the exemplar for the Cambridge manuscript (Luxford, "An Unlisted Manuscript," 290). Both lack the account of Albina found in other manuscripts of the Latin *Brut*.

⁴² Jacob Hammer, who noticed these verses in a manuscript of the *Historia*, attributed them to Johannes Beverus, whom Julia Crick also identifies as John of London. "The Poetry of Johannes Beverus with Extracts from his *Tractatus de Bruto Abbreviato*," *Modern Philology* 34 (1936-37): 119-32, and J. Crick, *The Historia Regum Britanniae of Geoffrey of Monmouth*, vol. 4: *Dissemination and Reception in the Later Middle Ages* (Cambridge, D.S. Brewer, 1991), 80-85.

De origine gigantum. The main hand of the book dates from the late fourteenth or the first quarter of the fifteenth century, but in addition to the *Historia Regum Britanniae*, the book also contains a Latin Albina prologue and a summary of British history that professes to make it easier to sort the truth of the narrative from fiction.⁴³ Based on analysis of these texts, Julia Crick and James Carley put the manuscript's origins in York, and they surmise that it is a later copy of one of the earliest manuscripts embellished by the Albina story.⁴⁴

Even though the text of the *Historia* might have been copied from the earlier manuscript, Cleopatra D VIII acquired an extra flourish in the Latin verses added in the margins at key moments in the narrative. While the verses touch upon many subjects, chief among them is the role of women, good or ill. In commenting on the poetry, Jacob Hammer notes that Johannes Beverus preserved a strong sense of moral dichotomy among the poems, with the bad examples offset by good.⁴⁵ With respect to female characters, then, the addition of these thirteenth-century poems to Cleopatra D VIII continued the tradition of embellishment that the Albina story began and the Latin *Brut* carried still further. What we observe in the manuscript record is not a fifteenth-century and a fourteenth-century creation, but the constant addition of new meaning and material to the early history of the Britons: a point of transmission but also of polytomy, as new influences came together to inflect old histories.

Within the two Latin *Brut* manuscripts, the verses are integrated into the text of the *Brut*, where they replace some of the longer rhetorical flourishes found in the *Historia*. The verses on liberty, for example, replace the petition of Brutus to the Greek king Pandrasus, where he notes that the Trojans, his kin, deserve to be free and would rather live like animals

⁴³ BL MS Cotton Cleopatra D VIII, fols 4r-5v.

⁴⁴ Carley and Crick, "Constructing Albion's Past," 379; Crick, *HRB* vol. 3, 145-47.

⁴⁵ Hammer, "Johannes Beverus," 128 and 130-32.

in the woods than as servants of the Greeks.⁴⁶ The couplets are employed at other moments where Britain's liberty hangs in the balance, replacing Tonwenne's warning to her feuding sons about letting foreigners into the land, and summarizing Cassibelan's downfall at the hands of Julius Caesar.⁴⁷ As with the poetry in MS HM 19960, the poems can also run against the grain of the included material. While both Latin *Bruts* contain the prophecies of Merlin in their entirety, they also include a couplet that cautions against the validity of such premonitions.⁴⁸

The presence of so many different poems, or, possibly, the same poem in different places would frustrate an editor trying to make sense of the Latin *Brut* manuscripts. However, the different sources of these poems suggest that the production of the Latin *Brut* was not an exercise in direct copying but rather an exercise in compilation, making use of a broad range of historical material. Thematically, these inclusions can illustrate more than a compiler's source material. Indeed, these rhetorical elements were not confined to Latin *Brut* manuscripts. They found their way back into Middle English *Bruts* as well, demonstrating that for a subset of its readership, popular or even vernacular history could evoke echoes of eloquence. In these cases, the historical narrative of Britain's rulers provided the framework for expansion of classical or contemporary composition, and they brought a number of new texts into conversation with the vernacular history for its later audiences.

⁴⁶ *HRB I*: 92-104; BL MS Harley 3906, fol. 3v.

⁴⁷ BL MS Harley 3906, 10v and 15v.

⁴⁸ BL MS Harley 3906, fol. 27v. "Iure stupent homines hominem ventura referre / cum sit solio scire futurum dei" (Men are rightly astounded that another man should recount future things / for it is for God alone to know the future).

IV. Back Again: Translations to Middle English

The exchange between Latin and vernacular texts did not stop at the compilation of the Latin *Bruts*. It fed back into the Peculiar Middle English *Bruts*, and these texts often gained more than the translated text of England's history. As we have seen with the inclusion of part of the *De indagacione orbis* in BL MS Royal 18 A IX, the association of geography with histories was not confined to Latin versions of the *Brut*, even though the partial text preserves traces of its Latin source. Rather, the Latin *Brut* manuscripts are clear exercises in variation upon a theme. Even as the work defies clear labels, the Latin *Brut* is an important reminder of how historical impulses, new and old, were crossing intellectual and linguistic boundaries, and how the expansion of England's history took place at all parts along the narrative, and not just in the near contemporary continuations.

The expansion of Brutus' ancestry beyond Aeneas in the Latin *Brut* was taken up by the Peculiar *Bruts* through compilation as well as original composition. Oxford, MS Lyell 34 unites genealogy and cosmography in its introduction, beginning its account of Brutus' descent with the three sons of Noah, who divide the world into Asia (Shem), Africa (Ham), and Europe (Japheth). From Japheth's first son, Alanus, come a series of grandchildren whose names prophecy those of Rome, France, Germany, and Britain.⁴⁹ The chapter then goes on to integrate the pagan genealogy of the Latin *Brut* into the Christian, making Jupiter into a tyrant ruler of Italy and another of Alanus' grandchildren.⁵⁰ This additional chapter thus provides a sketch of the geography of Europe along with the relations of Brutus' ancestors, expanding the chronological and geographical context of Britain's history.

⁴⁹ Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Lyell 34, fol. 4r.

⁵⁰ *ibid.* fol. 4v.

BL MS Harley 53, a Peculiar Middle English *Brut* composed after 1450, demonstrates how elaborate this exchange could be.⁵¹ While the text of the *Brut* does not show evidence of direct translation from a manuscript of the Latin *Brut*, the embellishments made to the entire manuscript that classify it as “Peculiar” show that its compiler and its audience were interested in expanding the history along similar and, indeed, bi-lingual lines. Genealogical material is not incorporated directly into the text of the *Brut* in MS Harley 53, but rather precedes it. Beginning with Adam, a series of genealogical diagrams denote the descent of the Trojans from Lamech, the British kings from Aeneas, the Saxons from Lamech as well as Woden. A later folio incorporates the Norman dukes beginning with Rollo. Its purpose is not to present an unbroken succession of monarchs in Britain; on the contrary, it is explicit about where the reigns of England’s different ruling nations end, a theme also found in the annotation of the *Brut*.⁵² This diagram shows instead how disparate ancestries are incorporated through marriage and are unified through their control over England. By itself, the diagram in MS Harley 53 provides a scant narrative, one which it relies upon the text of the *Brut* to fill out.

The most notable feature of the text is the composition of original Latin poetry around points during the early narrative that detail conquest and the passage of power from one people to another. This begins at the prologue of the chronicle, with a sixteen-line poem that summarizes the transfer of power from the Trojans to the English, whose rightful claim is reinforced by the use of the English language.⁵³ The poems that follow provide summaries

⁵¹ London, BL MS Harley 53. The manuscript is thought to have a mid-fifteenth-century provenance, since the genealogies contained in the manuscript stop before the birth of Edward IV in 1457. Matheson, *Prose Brut*, 297-301.

⁵² For example, on fol. 23r, after the murders of Ferrex and Porrex (see Table 1).

⁵³ London, BL MS Harley 53, fol. 14 r. “Anglica lingua sonat ; Anglos fore nobiliores / regni rectores ; dum sua lingua tonat” (Let the English language sound, that the English be more noble governors of the kingdom while their own language resounds).

of key figures in the history: Brutus, Julius Caesar, Arthur, Cadwallader, and William the Conqueror. Each stresses a different aspect of the figure it describes, using details already found in the text: for example, Brutus' Trojan ancestry or Caesar's exaction of tribute. They divide the narrative into successive episodes of conquest, along the fault lines of rupture and succession laid out in other Middle English and Latin *Bruts*. The introductory poem takes law and kingship as its themes, though there is something particularly emphatic about a Latin poem glorifying the English language within a mostly English text. Though the poem addresses them as *Anglos*, the audience for these verses—the later Plantagenets—would have been as ethnically English as they were ethnically British. As the *Brut* evolved, its continuations became increasingly ambiguous about the nature of what it meant to be “English,” presenting true Englishness as a mixed constitution that perhaps no previous nation could attain on its own.⁵⁴ The compiler and audience of MS Harley 53 appears to add a further wrinkle to this ambiguity, suggesting that even linguistically the history of England could be mixed with that of others.

Other Latin elements are also preserved in the manuscript. Merlin's verses summarize his parentage and serve to bracket the inclusion of his prophecies in the text, also in Latin. The account of Arthur's reign contains an epitaph identifying him as *rex quondam rex futurus*, (which Mallory would render as “once and future king”) but breaking from the earlier

⁵⁴ Brie, *The Brut*, 220. Margaret Lamont renders the quotation into modern English as follows:

“And it was no wonder, for the great lords of England were not all of one nation, but were mixed with other nations, that is to say, some Britons, some Saxons, some Danish, some Poitevins, some Frenchmen, some Normans, some Spaniards, some Romans, some Hainaulters, some Flemings, and of other diverse nations, which nations were not compatible with the natural blood of England. And if the great lords of England had been married only to English people, then should there have been peace and rest among them, without any envy.”

M. Lamont, “‘The Kynde Bloode of Englonde’: Remaking Englishness in the Middle English Prose *Brut*.” (Unpublished PhD Dissertation, University of California at Los Angeles, 2007), 1-2. See above, Chapter 3, p. 140.

Brut narrative by openly acknowledging his death.⁵⁵ In their contributions to the narrative, these features of MS Harley 53 provide more than ornamentation, or even the combination of linguistic traditions. Like the Latin poetry composed to augment the *Historia Regum Britanniae* in BL MS Cotton Cleopatra E VII, these poems appear to be new creations inspired by the tradition of Latinate history writing, done with the intent of augmenting the *Brut* narrative. The divisions they create in the text are consistent with a marginal gloss that tracks the failure of the different lines of monarchy, as well as the ebb and flow of Christianity in Britain. Thus, not only are the central concerns of the Latin *Brut* imported back into English, the creativity lying behind the creation of so many of the Latin texts was adapted as well.

Bodleian Library MS Ashmole 791, part of a group of Middle English manuscripts directly translated from a Latin *Brut* text, takes a different approach to the poetry.⁵⁶ The epitaphs and verses from the Latin *Brut* are left in their original language, demarcated in the margins by the annotation “versus,” and followed by translations. Bede’s prophecy of Rome’s fall is translated literally, while Cadwallader’s epitaph is summarized with a short English verse (“for the love of heaven king / Cedwalla forsoke all earthly things”).⁵⁷ As with the Latin compositions, the translator’s interest in these passages was at least partly in their meter, and it is fair to assume that the readers of Ashmole 791 would have been able to read and appreciate the poetry in both languages, rather than relying solely upon the English adaptations.⁵⁸

⁵⁵ *ibid.* fol. 53r.

⁵⁶ Oxford, Bodleian Library Ms. Ashmole 791, fol. 1r. The text begins imperfectly and is thus missing the Albina prologue. The other two manuscripts in this group are Columbia University, MS Plympton 261 and Norfolk, Holkham Hall MS 669. See Matheson, *Prose Brut*, pp. 302-6 esp. 304-5.

⁵⁷ MS Ashmole 791, fols 22v, 21v.

⁵⁸ This is true for at least one sixteenth century reader, whose annotations are in both English and Latin.

The poetry in these manuscripts is important not simply because it gestures towards a group of older Latin works that would not usually be considered in conjunction with the vernacular *Brut*. It also points to a way in which small excerpts from Latin histories could be transmitted and collected in the margins and flyleaves of the Middle English *Brut*, as well as in other vernacular and Latin texts which did not contain the entire history. Much in the way that the Albina story attached itself to more and more copies of Latin and Anglo-Norman works over the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, modifying their histories in the process, the episodes central to Britain's early history had the ability to take "to the air," bringing an array of meanings and uses with them. Put another way, these manuscripts contain both a vernacular and a Latin context for the "superficial" humanist readings of texts described by Daniel Wakelin, in which readers "stripped poems of their patrons, spotted the *memento mori* in celebrations of civic life, taught grammar from books of policy and policy from books of grammar."⁵⁹ In particularly short cases, one suspects the presence of books might not even have been necessary for this type of augmentation, but that readers or owners might hear them from others and copy them into their *Bruts* from memory.

Britain's early history contained one such episode in the "little verses" between Brutus and Diana, which contain the prophecy by which the Britons are legitimized in their possession of England.⁶⁰ As the legendary history of Britain was translated from Latin into the various vernacular languages, this episode remained in the history in a faithfully translated form. Its validity was a subject of debate, even among Geoffrey's earliest

⁵⁹ Wakelin, *Humanism*, 22.

⁶⁰ *HRB I*: 294-312 and above, Chapter 1, pp. 50. Middle English *Brut* manuscripts containing this addition are Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Douce 290; BL MS Additional 10099; BL MS Harley 53; Huntington Library MS 136. Additionally, in Huntington Library MS 31911 the verses are appended to a fourteenth-century compilation of legal treatises. In BL MS Cotton Vespasian E XII they are found in a fifteenth-century collection of poetry from Lincoln Cathedral, and in BL MS Royal 13 A VI, another manuscript with a Lincoln provenance, the verses are appended to the Latin compilation based on Henry of Huntington in a fifteenth-century hand.

translators, but no one removed it completely. In the surviving *Brut* manuscripts, this episode is a focal point for articulation and annotation. Marginal annotations by scribes and readers call attention to the lines, and in many manuscripts the speeches are rubricated or underlined within the text. As with the vernacular poetry, this prophecy formed an important part of the visual, as well as the narrative, logic of the *Brut*. Beyond this, however, the prophecies were key points where readers could look *outside* the *Brut* for further information or interpretation, in some instances drawing their knowledge of other texts back into the margins through annotation.

Even though the inclusion of these verses in the Middle English *Brut* does not provide any additional information—the Middle English Version already contained the prophecies in an English prose translation—the incorporation of the prophecies in their original Latin suggests a readership aware of the bilingual historical tradition, either from the outset or, more commonly, as a later discovery. When the *Oratio* appears in Latin, it does so most commonly as a later addition, either in the margins or in the flyleaves. In BL MS Additional 10099, a late fifteenth-century hand has added it onto an earlier leaf.⁶¹ While the prophecy appears in English in the text, a cross-reference serves to tie this into the narrative. Both verses are given with their Latin titles, and the first line of the poetry is written in the margin, followed by “etc” and a symbol employed by the annotator elsewhere in the text as a “nota” mark.⁶² Even though the verses are not copied into the text, they are thus still connected to it, and also to the later kings of England. The folio also contains a list of the kings from William the Conqueror through Henry VII. The reader has placed a bracket around these kings’ names, which connects to the last line of Diana’s prophecy: “from your

⁶¹ MS Additional 10099, fol. 10v.

⁶² Ibid., fol. 14r.

descendants will arise kings who / will be masters of the whole world.”⁶³ This short interpolation by the reader thus implies that, in his vision of England’s history, *all* of the island’s kings, not just the Britons, shared in Diana’s prophecy. For readers such as this one, historical learning did not stop at the vernacular *Brut*. Instead, he either already knew where to find the prophecies in their original Latin or, upon discovering them, worked them into the scheme of the narrative.

Indeed, when the *Oratio Bruti* found its way into manuscripts that were not copies of the *Brut*—or even manuscripts that contained no other historical works—it preserved some sense of its original function, establishing the prophetic destiny of the Britons as part of England’s history. In two fifteenth-century manuscripts from Lincoln, the *Oratio Bruti* has been added to the flyleaves of a copy of Henry of Huntington’s *Historia Anglorum* and to a collection of Latin poetry containing the poetry of Walter Map and the *Griselde* of Petrarch.⁶⁴ In the copy of the *Historia Anglorum*, the poem begins a series of chronological notes on the early Britons that mirror the narrative found in the Latin *Brut*. These notes provide a sketch similar to the annotation in MS Additional 10099, but this interpolation supplements the opening of the *Historia Anglorum*, which proceeds quickly to the Romans in its opening sections. Although the second manuscript contains very little material that might be called historical, the political overtones of the prophecy (from you shall arise kings who will rule the world) are highlighted by a sixteenth-century annotator, who has supplied a couplet of his own in the margins and explained it in terms of the prophecy, (the text in brackets is his): “hunc [s. brutum] super es qui superes successor [o rex angliae] honoris / degener es qui

⁶³ Ibid., fol. 10v “hic de *prole* tue reges nascentur, et ipsis / tocius terre subditus orbis erit.” The translation is from M. Reeve ed. and N. Wright trans. *The History of the Kings of Britain* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: 2007), 21.

⁶⁴ London, British Library MSS Royal 13 B VI and Cotton Vespasian E.XII.

degeneres a laude prioris.”⁶⁵ The parenthetical comments both clarify the sense of the Latin, and interpret the prophecy in favor of the English kings, either Henry VII or VIII, who could claim Brutus as a distant relative.

While annotations such as these have been generally used to indicate that individual manuscripts were being read by a diverse or educated audience, they can also demonstrate that the readers of the Middle English prose *Brut* were not solely reliant upon that text for their knowledge of Britain’s past. When read in connection with the other materials contained within the *Brut* manuscripts, these annotations reveal an audience whose historical knowledge was expanding, and they call attention to the ways that the genealogies, verses, and material from Latin works could supplement the origin story of England found in the *Brut*, creating and encouraging new historical compilations. The surviving manuscripts that contain interpolations and additions demonstrate the range of material that could be read in connection with a popular, vernacular history.

The new features incorporated into the Middle English Peculiar *Bruts* translated from Latin were apparent to the readers of these books. Two of the three identify themselves as the “New Chronicles,” while the third (MS Ashmole 791) is missing its first folia and begins in the middle of Brutus’ genealogy. The text of the manuscript also preserves a selection of references to the age of the world and the activities of British saints and Roman emperors, underlined in red ink within the chronicle, as well as the division of England into the Heptarchy kingdoms.⁶⁶ The manuscript has few internal divisions, simply initials for chapters, and very little rubrication aside from the underlining of years. However, two

⁶⁵ “You are over him [sic. Brutus], if you outdo (him), o successor of (his) honor [o king of England] / you are degenerate should you fall short of your prior in praise” London, British Library MS Cotton Vespasian E.XII, fol. 10r.

⁶⁶ The date of London’s foundation, Rome’s foundation, and the arrival of Julius Caesar in England are all given with respect to the age of the world. MS Ashmole 791, fols. 2r, 4v, 8r.

readers of the late fifteenth and early sixteenth century have picked the additions, particularly the notice of Joseph of Arimathea's arrival in Britain, out of the history, noting it in their annotations.⁶⁷

Lambeth Palace MS 493, a previously unnoticed manuscript of the Latin *Brut*, reveals another clue about the exchange between the Latin and Middle English *Bruts*. One subgroup of the Peculiar Middle English *Bruts* consists of eight manuscripts which all have similar narratives to the Latin *Brut*. However, it is unclear whether these texts were precursors to the Latin *Brut* or translations from Latin back into English. Three of these texts end in the same place as the Latin *Brut*, along with the partial inscription "I dare say no more," or "I dare say no more etc."⁶⁸ Lambeth Palace MS 493 contains a clue as to the source of this passage in the textually complete, but equally cryptic phrase that follows the text of the chronicle: "*non audeo plusquam propter metum iudeorum*."⁶⁹ The scribe may intend this as a reference to John 20:19, where the apostles are hiding after Christ's death (*et fores erant clausae ubi erant discipuli propter metum iudeorum*), implying that further discussion of James of Scotland's murder would put him in a compromising situation.⁷⁰ These manuscripts, roughly half of the group, increase the possibility that the genesis of the Latin *Bruts* might be traced back to the increasingly Latinate and scholarly aspirations of Henry VI's courtiers and relatives, and, like Tito Livio's *Vita Henrici Quinti*, were products of the need to commemorate Henry V during the tumultuous "majority" of his son.

⁶⁷ Ibid, fol. 9r.

⁶⁸ These are MSS Cambridge, Trinity College O.11.11, Tokyo, Takamiya MS 19, and Champaign, IL, University of Illinois MS 82. See Matheson, *Prose Brut*, 278-94.

⁶⁹ London, Lambeth Palace MS 493, fol. 108 r. "I do not dare (to say) more out of fear of the Jews."

⁷⁰ In discussing this group of manuscripts, Matheson uses the presence of a version with Latin features that ends in 1422 as evidence that the Latin versions were copied from these Middle English texts, but leaves the possibility open that all of the manuscripts are translations from the Latin. (*Prose Brut*, 293) Further evidence from the Latin *Brut* manuscripts may make this picture of transmission even more complicated.

Conclusion: Writing and Reading between Languages

The manuscript tradition of the Latin *Brut* is varied but, as I have demonstrated, it is not a conglomeration of disparate parts. Rather, it is a clever and provocative fusion of elements and influences that historians have tended to study at best in isolation, but at times in outright opposition. Its compilers looked to adorn the work with scholarly heft and classical rhetorical flair, while hewing to a historical tradition that owed much more to vernacular models than it did to the works it borrowed from. To return to Luxford's estimation, Latin *Bruts* like Trinity College MS R.7.13 and BL MS Harley 3906 provided fifteenth-century monasteries like Sherbourne Abbey with a text to draw from, but the Latin *Brut* in HM 19960, with its geographic interpolations and additional material on William of Wykeham's fight against Lollardy, resists this theory of decline as well as Luxford's assumed monastic provenance.⁷¹ While it might be tempting to point to the inclusion of religious and Latinate material in the manuscript as a sign of monastic influence and moralizing, the later reader who attributed the work to John Tiptoft, earl of Worcester and Yorkist enforcer, certainly did not think that such a chronicle need only be produced in a fifteenth-century monastery.

In the cases above, the mix of Latin and vernacular works shifts towards Latin. While the influence of vernacular texts is present in the final continuations to both manuscripts, it is possible that their compilers and audiences would have been more at home encountering them in Latin. Given the associations between the *Vita Henrici Quinti* and the growing number of Middle English *Bruts* that might have been created through direct

⁷¹ see above, n. 17.

translation, it is possible that the genesis of the Latin *Brut* owed more to the translation and exchange among Latin works than previously recognized.

It would be a mistake, both textually and culturally, to attempt to isolate the Latin tradition from the vernacular. The copies of the Peculiar Middle English *Bruts* discussed in this chapter indicate that the efforts to commemorate and remake history were not confined solely to Latin manuscripts. The Peculiar *Bruts* that draw upon Latin manuscripts for their text do not do so uniformly. In some, the expansion of history past 1419 that was the main aim of the Latin *Brut* was translated and appended to earlier copies of the Middle English *Brut*. These hybrid copies complicate and enrich the tradition of a chronicle that, as I have stated, cannot be called exclusively vernacular.

Furthermore, elements in the Middle English *Bruts* also demonstrate that the links between the Latin and the vernacular tradition were not simply the influence of one linguistic tradition imposing on another. On the one hand, the partial copy of the *De indagacione orbis* in the front of BL MS Royal 18 A IX may just as well have been compiled from an existing English translation of the *Polychronicon* as from a Latin one. On the other hand, in the *Brut* in BL MS Harley 53, we find an audience at home with both vernacular and Latin texts interchangeably. With resourcefulness and creativity, the compiler of MS Harley 53 has assembled a coherent work with a scope and set of historical interests similar to that found in the Latin *Bruts*, without needing to directly translate material from any of the known Latin texts. Viewed solely in connection with Middle English *Bruts*, Harley 53 is peculiar indeed. When placed in conversation with the array of Latin works being compiled and reworked, the text may be unique, but the vision of history it espouses is not.

What, if anything, can be said about the readership of these books? They certainly represent a vibrant subset of fifteenth-century readership as a whole. These books allow us to revise the narrative of Latinity and vernacularity in the learning of history. Writing on the fifteenth century, Malcolm Parkes saw the distinguishing features of readership to be an increasing elevation of the taste of those readers who previously used books only for pragmatic purposes.⁷² This phenomenon, however, is almost completely limited to works in the vernacular. In the excerpting and revising of both Latin and vernacular history, these books more closely approximate those of legal or medical professionals, revealing, in Parkes' estimation, "that intelligent and intimate interest in the subject matter that we should expect of the practitioner."⁷³ Practitioners of history were becoming more diverse in their sources and means of expression, as well as their historical concerns.

The languages at work within the manuscripts also provide evidence of more subtle distinctions between these readers than their Latinity or vernacularity. In terms of their annotation, these books provide ample evidence that their readers were conversant in both English and Latin, as well as French, but the real importance is the degree to which different languages are not removed from the main text of this family of *Bruts*. The Latin in the Middle English chronicles, for example, is not only found in the margins, but extends into the works themselves, demonstrating a readership with not only a familiarity for both languages, but a willingness to read history in both.

Finally these texts may offer a valuable perspective on the types of "humanism" developing in fifteenth-century England. The patrons of these books were unquestionably the individuals most exposed to the incoming influences of Latin culture that usually define

⁷² M. Parkes, "The Literacy of the Laity," in *Scribes, Scripts, and Readers* (London: Hambleton, 1991), 275-297.

⁷³ Parkes, "Literacy of the Laity," 283.

humanist inquiry. They counted foreign scholars and papal legates among their intellectual companions, and they read the newest translations of classical poets they could come across. And yet, for all the increased concerns over chronological accuracy and elegant style the manuscripts betray, they base their borrowings and embellishments, for the most part, on venerable examples of English style. Daniel Wakelin's definition of humanism as a return to classical texts in an effort to make them new and embrace their utility appears to hold for this group of readers.⁷⁴ However, the texts that these compilers and readers considered classic were not those from Roman, but English antiquity.

If the different manuscripts under review here diverge from the traditional criteria of "humanism"—criteria against which much of the new learning and literature of fifteenth-century England is found wanting—a similar impulse created these disparate books. Their compilers had identified gaps in the completeness and style of the *Brut* that rendered Britain's early history ineffective, and they sought to remedy those defects, either through compilation or their own creativity. Although the narrative of England's ancient history still had much to offer those interested in the transfer of power, religious or secular, among the island's inhabitants, that history could not simply be reissued as-is. In creating a new version of the island's past, the island's historians resorted to older material, making it new through modification, willful piracy, and in some cases original invention.

Indeed, for the different audiences to remake the *Brut*, the past history of the island could not remain the same. As new features were introduced into the narrative of the *Brut*, these items were also subject to scrutiny. If, as Kennedy suggests, a goal of the circle of humanist readers and writers like John Tiptoft was to rehabilitate the history of England for

⁷⁴ Wakelin, *Humanism*, 193.

the houses of Lancaster and, later, York, this could not be done without smoothing over the transfer of power between different peoples. This goal was accomplished, in part, by ensuring that the line of British rulers ended with the succession of Cadwallader and by drawing attention to the recovery of Arthur's relics. However, in introducing the notice of Arthur's death and the epitaphs that accompanied the later monarchs, they placed Arthur more firmly in the historical record, where others could encounter and embellish his presence, as the compiler of MS Harley 53 did with the "*rex quondam et futurus*" epitaph.⁷⁵ While his interpolation is unique among Latin manuscripts, it would not have been to readers of such vernacular texts as John Hardyng's *Chronicle* or John Lydgate's *Fall of Princes*.

The processes of adaptation and translation on display in these manuscripts represents more than the transmission of texts from one language or exemplar to another. Rather, it shows the ways in which elements from Latinate and vernacular histories were recombining in the minds of compilers, scribes, and readers. It would be impossible to describe any of these compilations as straightforward translations from one language into another, let alone as part of a process through which Latin historical texts gained a wider, vernacular audience. The differences between these works should not completely obscure one key similarity between them, namely, their presentation as cohesive units, and, importantly, as narratives of English history. They bear the traces of their textual forebears without being molded in their image. That is, they are properly offspring, not clones of their parents. Collectively, they call attention to a wider variety of sources that could be connected to the narrative of England's kings, and testify to the many valences—political, religious, and literary—that could be called forth by Britain's ancient past.

⁷⁵ See above, n.40 and also J. Withrington, "The Arthurian Epitaph in Malory's *Morte d'Arthur*," in J. Carley ed. *Glastonbury Abbey and the Arthurian Tradition*, 211-247 at 229-31.

Chapter Five

A Program of Learning for Diverse Gentlemen: Manuscript and Print c.1480-1535

The expansion of historical texts and historical reading in late medieval England provided material and inspiration for England's earliest printers as well as her scribes. On 10 June 1480, as its colophon tells us, the *Brut* became the first vernacular prose history to appear in print. Appearing under the title *The Chronicles of England*, William Caxton's edition was traditional in at least as many ways as it was innovative. The book was printed in one color only, with spaces left for rubrication to be supplied by hand. Caxton's other additions were equally understated: he provided a brief prefatory note and a table of chapter headings, both of which were probably intended to aid in the marketing of the book as much as to serve as finding aids.¹ While they offer little new information about the book, both point to one compelling promotional detail. Caxton's *Chronicles of England* began with Albina and Brutus, but it continued all the way down to "the beginnyng of the regne of our said souverain lord kyng Edward the iiij."² The authorship of this continuation has been the subject of some scholarly and bibliographical attention, and it appears that the author was likely William Caxton himself.³

Beyond the question of authorship and an enumeration of Caxton's sources, there has been little attention paid to Caxton's attitude toward the history, even in comparison to

¹ The table also took further advantage of the division of the chronicle into episodes, an early feature of the *Brut* in manuscript. See above, Chapter 3, pp. 125-29.

² *Chronicles of England*, (Westminster: 1480), sig. ii r.

³ L. Matheson, "Printer and Scribe: Caxton, the *Polychronicon*, and the *Brut*." *Speculum* 60 (1985): 593-614. The *Brut* used as the copy text was likely Huntington Library MS HM 136. See D. Wakelin, "Caxton's Exemplar for the Chronicles of England?" *Journal of the Early Book Society* (2011): 75-113.

his edition of another English historical work, the *Polychronicon* (1481-82), which re-used a large portion of his continuation from the *Chronicles*.⁴ Two common misperceptions have arisen from this lacuna, the first being that Caxton produced the *Chronicles* solely for economic gain. The second, related perception was that the “medieval” *Brut*, though popular, had become a fixed text in print. As an influence on thought, the *Brut* had run its course and was replaced by the works of sixteenth-century chroniclers, or by a wider range of literature that rendered the chronicle genre obsolete.⁵

Both perceptions have their roots in studies of the printed book and its reception that have developed outside the context of manuscript studies. The output of these presses has long been considered the domain of bibliographers, and though the picture these studies offer is still incomplete and speculative, a good deal of information exists about the books, more so than for many of the printers. However, the isolated nature of bibliographic surveys of printers, or of “national” printing operations, means that very little comparative work has been done with this information.⁶ We know that printers shared material, type, and developed relationships with other booksellers, but the content of their texts is often left to other specialists to analyze.

The blame for this separation should not be laid solely at the feet of early modernists. Studies of medieval manuscripts, including the *Brut*, often use printing as a

⁴ Matheson, “Printer and Scribe,” 601-606; K. Tonry, “Reading History in Caxton's *Polychronicon*,” *The Journal of English and German Philology* 111/2 (2011): 169-198.

⁵ See J. Levine, *Humanism and History: Origins of Modern English Historiography* (Ithaca, NY: 1987), 19-49; D. Woolf, *Reading History in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: 2003), 10-78. More specifically to the *Chronicles of England*, see Matheson, PB 27 and T. Drukker, “Readings in the Middle English Prose *Brut* Chronicle,” Unpublished PhD Dissertation, Cambridge University, 2002), 20.

⁶ See, for England, J. Raven, *The Business of Books: Booksellers and the English Book Trade 1450-1850* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007); A useful survey of the output of the first English presses is L. Hellinga, *William Caxton and Early Printing in England* (London: British Library, 2010). A broader survey of early print production can be found in A. Pettigree, *The Book in the Renaissance* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2010), and a notable foray into comparison is J. Boffey, *Manuscript and Print in London, c.1475-1530* (London: British Library, 2012).

convenient breaking point, reinforcing the perceived division between the two methods of production.⁷ Studies of manuscript and print culture alike are on the firmest ground when they are able to discuss the contexts of a book's initial production.⁸ Print enjoys a critical advantage in this respect, as the sites of production of printed texts are less varied than those of manuscript composition. Thus, while a large number of studies have attempted to assess the evolution of the book between script and print, developments in the book are largely acknowledged through comparison of the features of manuscript production that are adopted or enhanced by printers and the ramifications that those changes had for both medieval books and medieval authors.⁹ Thus, as long as production is emphasized, an implied distinction remains—and likely always will—between print and manuscript. Fully integrating the two is left to studies of readership.

Both the reliance of these studies on the economics of print and the periodization they reinforce are problematic for several reasons. First, although Caxton's continuation provided the textual basis for all subsequent printed editions, later printers embellished the text as they saw fit. Their editions ought not be treated as "reprints" of Caxton's. Second, while Caxton produced comparatively few other histories, it appears that he saw the *Chronicles* as part of a larger program of reading and learning. Indeed, the print productions of the late fifteenth century (Caxton's and those of his competitors) created a crucial context for reading and writing history, albeit one often overlooked in studies of manuscript culture. Finally, the interactions between existing *Brut* manuscripts (or compilations that include the

⁷ M. McLaren, *The London Chronicles of the Fifteenth Century: A Revolution in English Writing*, (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 2002) 145.

⁸ R. Darnton, "What is the History of Books?" in *The Book History Reader*, ed. D. Finkelstein and A. McCleary. 2nd ed. (Routledge, 2006), 8-26.

⁹ D. McKitterick, *Print, Manuscript, and the Search for Order 1450-1850* (Cambridge: 2003); J. Boffey, *Manuscript and Print in London c1475-1530* (London: British Library, 2012); M. Smith, "The Design Relationship between the Manuscript and the Incunable," in *A Millennium of the Book: Production, Design, and Illustration in Manuscript and Print 900-1900*, ed. R. Myers and M. Harris (Delaware: Oak Knoll Press, 1994), 23-44.

Brut) and printed books demonstrate that late medieval readers did not readily abandon one medium of production, or even one chronicle, quickly or entirely. Together, the manuscripts and printed books provide more valuable evidence that reading history in late medieval England was not static and restricted, but instead incorporated a wide range of concerns and texts.

Even though he did not explicitly attach his name to the text, Caxton was still taking a risk in compiling his continuation. Caxton's narrative ended some twenty years before the present day, yet his compilation addressed the succession of a reigning monarch in Edward IV, and one who had taken the throne by force. It fell to Caxton to describe the circumstances leading up to this event: the sudden death of Henry V, as well as the years of reversal, loss, and instability that marked the minority and, more dramatically, the adult rule of Henry VI. To complicate matters further, the fate of the nation was reflected in the person of the king, and the narrative of the *Brut* centered on the actions of the monarch. Caxton's continuation dealt with the disastrous and largely absentee reign of Henry VI, and as such posed a further problem in the context of the *Brut*. While the history offered him numerous examples of good kings, bad kings, and even kings overcome by evil counselors, it had no precedent for a monarch whose mental incapacities rendered him truly absent.¹⁰ As we have seen, versions of the Latin and Middle English *Bruts* had taken on this task, but unlike those anonymous compilations, the production of these *Chronicles* could be traced back to him.

Caxton, then, needed to tread a fine line in assessing the kingship of Henry VI, which he went about in two main ways. First, he focuses on moments when Henry VI could

¹⁰ C. Carpenter, *The Wars of the Roses: Politics and the Constitution of England, c.1437-1509* (Cambridge: 1997), 87-115.

be shown to demonstrate agency. Even though the chapters of the continuation focus more on the activities of the nobility than they do on Henry, they include descriptions of Henry exercising what would have been legitimate royal authority: his coronations, his role in appointing knights and barons, and his position in processions and tournaments. Pageantry likely had a prominent role in the learning and use of history within English society, but within Caxton's text these insertions demonstrate that the monarch was still capable of standing at the head of the nation, to the limited extent that he could. In the ongoing struggle against France, England's fortunes turn on the marriage of Henry VI to Margaret of Anjou, which brought about a costly and temporary peace. In the *Chronicles*, Caxton lays the blame for this decision solely on Henry, focusing on this pivotal moment as an opportunity to draw moral lessons about kingship. The episode foreshadows the downfall to come and although the blame is Henry's, the loss is all of England's:

Lo what a mariage was this, as to the comparison of that othir mariage of armynak [i.e. to one of the Count of Armagnac's daughters]. For ther shold have bene delivered so many Castels and tounes in gyane and so much good shold have ben yeven with her, that alle Englund shold have ben ther by enriched, but contrarie wise fyll wherefore every grete prince ought to kepe his promise for because of brekyng of this promise, and for mariage of Quene Margret what losse hath had the Reame of Englund, by losyng of Normandy and Guyan, by division in the Reame, the rebelling of communes ayenst their prince 7 lordes.¹¹

By blaming the king's decision, rather than the king's incapacity to reverse its consequences, Caxton not only grants him agency, but also casts him in the mold of earlier rulers who have acted injudiciously in marriage: Locrine, Brut's son, and Vortigern, whose marriage to Hengist's daughter Ronwenne allows the Saxons to establish a foothold in England and eventually drive out the Britons. Margaret also becomes an example of the "women desirous of power" that John Hardyng found true in the Albina narrative. Caxton, thus, employed an

¹¹ *Chronicles of England*, (Westminster: 1480), sig. x4 r-v.

understanding of the *Brut* to create a continuation that was consistent with the many readings of the *Brut* and of the history of all of Britain's kings.

Furthermore, Caxton was not the only printer to experiment with the form and content of the *Chronicles of England* in the early 1480s. His strategies as a compiler are thrown into sharpest relief through comparison with the anonymous compiler of the St. Albans edition, also known as the "Schoolmaster" or the "Schoolmaster Printer," who employed similar sources to dramatically different effect.¹² The variations introduced by the Schoolmaster created, in the mind of Lister Matheson, another distinct "Type" of the *Chronicles*, yet since the two Types had the same narrative (Caxton's) of English history, the distinction was largely unimportant.¹³ The production of this edition of the *Chronicles* represented an expansion of the form of the *Brut*, one which incorporated the influences of genealogy and chronology in its layout as well as its content. Unlike Caxton's continuation, the modifications introduced in the St. Albans edition dealt directly with the legendary past of England, as the compiler tried to integrate that history into the larger history of mankind since Creation. The *Chronicles* produced at St. Albans, then, reflected a reading of history much more heavily influenced by the Latin *Brut* tradition.

I have discussed both compilations and their shared sources in detail elsewhere, but one source in particular provides an excellent comparison of their compilation strategies and the approaches to reading history that lay behind them.¹⁴ That source is Werner Rolevinck's

¹² N. Weijer, "Re-Printing or Remaking? The Early Printed Editions of the *Chronicles of England*" in *The Prose Brut and other Late Medieval Chronicles: Books Have Their Histories*, ed. J. Rajsic, D. Hoche, and E. Kooper (Woodbridge: York Medieval Press, 2016), 125-146. For consistency, I will refer to the printer/compiler as the "Schoolmaster," even though the compiler and the printer of this edition may have been two distinct individuals at St. Albans.

¹³ Matheson, *Prose Brut*, 339-41.

¹⁴ The other source potentially shared between the two versions of the *Chronicles* is the *Polychronicon*, which the St. Albans compiler used to expand on the interpolations from the *Fasciculus*. See Weijer, "Re-printing," 127-37; Matheson, "Printer and Scribe," 604-5.

Fasciculus Temporum, a concordance of classical and Christian history from the creation of the world until 1473.¹⁵ The *Fasciculus* presented the succession of kings, popes, and Roman emperors in terms of a parallel genealogical succession, so that “any person of whatever intelligence could comprehend the entire history of time intelligible to anybody easily and, moreover, without work.”¹⁶ If the visual layout of the *Fasciculus* made comprehending history easy, however, printing the book required quite a bit of work. A timeline, measuring the passage of time since the creation of the world as well as the years in relation to Christ’s birth, ran left to right along the center of each page. The names of the kings and other figures were set in roundels, just as in a manuscript genealogy, and information about their reigns was placed alongside the roundels. In this way, each two-page opening of the book provided an immediate visual comparison of secular events (often on the top half) and events in Church history (often on the bottom half) in relation to the timeline and to each other. A masterpiece of early printing, the *Fasciculus Temporum* was widely produced all across Europe from the mid-1470s, so much so that both Caxton and the Schoolmaster likely used different editions in each of their compilations.¹⁷

Caxton’s use of the *Fasciculus* left a less visible impact than that of the Schoolmaster. Within his continuation, he inserted short descriptions of the succession of Popes from Eugene IV (1431-47) to Pius II (1458-64). However, he did not intend these to be read in isolation from England’s history. His continuation extracts or adds information to

¹⁵ M. B. Stillwell, “The *Fasciculus Temporum*. A Genealogical Survey of Editions before 1480,” in *Bibliographical Essays: A Tribute to Wilberforce Eames*, ed. G. Winship (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1924), 409-40; L. Ward, “Two Carthusian Histories, their Authors and Audiences,” in *Die Ausbreitung kartäusischen Lebens und Geistes im Mittelalter*, Analecta Cartusiana 63, II (Salzburg: 1991), 132-6; J. Martens, “The *Fasciculus Temporum* of 1474: On Form and Content of the Incumable,” *Quaerendo* 22 (1992) 197-204; A. Classen, “Werner Rolevinck’s *Fasciculus Temporum*: The History of a Late Medieval Best-Seller or: The First Hypertext,” *Gutenberg Jarbuch* 81 (2006): 225-30.

¹⁶ ut pene simul tota temporum historia: brevissimo studio a quolibet intelligente nequam sine labore... possit incorporari.” Rolevinck, Werner, *Fasciculus Temporum*, Cologne, Heinrich Quentell 1479, sig. b2r.

¹⁷ Weijer, “Re-printing,” 142-3.

emphasize the pontiffs as combatants of heresy.¹⁸ In two instances, Caxton juxtaposes his sources to imply that England is connected to these struggles. Thus, Caxton's continuation expanded the more insular position of the earlier *Brut* continuations.

The first example of this expansion comes in Caxton's description of the schism between Pope Eugene IV and Antipope Felix V following the Council of Basel in 1431, which divided the Papacy until Felix abdicated to Eugene's successor, Nicholas V, in 1447. Caxton adds in an account of the resolution as follows:

for after he [Nicholas] was electe and sacred pope certeyne lordes of Fraunce and of Englonde were sente in to Savoye to Pope Felix, for to entrete hym to cesse of the papacie. And by the special labour of the bisshoppe of Norwych and the lord of Seint Johanes he cessed the the [sic] second yere after that pope Nicholas was sacred.¹⁹

A delegation was, indeed, sent, but it met with Felix in November of 1446. By the time that Felix abdicated—in May of 1447—the Bishop of Norwich, Walter Lyhert, had been back in England for several months.²⁰ In this episode, we witness Caxton's incorporation of new historical material, as well as his compression of time, to elevate England's place in European affairs.

Two of the most dramatic events in Caxton's continuation are made to coincide in a similar manner, and in their combination we see Caxton's strategy towards Henry VI and his positioning of England within European Christianity operating in concert. The chapter immediately following his description of the papal schism, "How Sir Franceys aragonoys took Fogiers in Normandie And of the losse of Constantinoble by the turke," links the loss

¹⁸ For example, his depiction of Pius II mentions his efforts to convert Mehmet II through letters, *Chronicles of England* (Westminster: 1480), sig. y2v.

¹⁹ *Chronicles of England* (Westminster: 1480), sig. x5r. Caxton's source of the interpolation remains unknown, leading Katleen Tonry to suggest that he invented the entire episode. Tonry, "Reading History," 195.

²⁰ "Lyhert, Walter (d.1472)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, DOI: 10.1093/ref:odnb/17247. Accessed March 25th, 2017.

of Norman territory to the loss of Christian territory in Greece. Caxton glosses over the English losses, stating that Francis took Fogiers [Fougeres] against the truce between Henry VI and Charles, giving the French the occasion to go on the offensive: “by which the frenshmen gate all Normandie *etc.*”²¹ This “etc.” allows Caxton to move immediately to the loss of Constantinople, which he also ascribes to treachery, and to the litany of woes of the Christians in Greece and in Europe. Caxton’s segue, “Aboute this tyme” covers the fact that, in a continuation dated by regnal years, he is moving the fall of Constantinople, which occurred in 1453, to 1448-1449 (27 Henry VI).²² In all likelihood, Caxton was aware of this and made the decision to move the fall of the city into a chapter where it would have the maximum narrative and rhetorical impact. By the chapter’s end, the unwinding of England’s fortunes in Normandy is also complete. The Duke of Somerset’s exile and subsequent murder begins the infighting among England’s nobility, foreshadowed by Caxton as “sorrow for sorrow and deth for deth.”²³

Caxton’s role in continuing the *Brut*, therefore, cannot be dismissed as the unthinking or mechanical reproduction of his sources, even as far as the manuscript text to 1419 is concerned. Rather Caxton carefully constructed his narrative in order to produce a consistent whole in the *Chronicles of England*. As such, the continuation renewed the earlier narrative even as it expanded its scope, if only slightly. Caxton’s additional sources and “embellishments” (to borrow his phrase from the *Polychronicon*) also indicate that his historical perspective viewed England—its citizens as well as its monarchy—in the context of a wider Christian world. Moreover, Caxton’s insertions from the *Fasciculus Temporum* were not meant as simple additions parallel to the narrative of English history, but rather provided

²¹ *Chronicles of England* (Westminster: 1480), sig x5v

²² *ibid.*

²³ *idem.*, sig. x6r

shape to the entire continuation and, in important instances, provided a framework for further embellishment of England's piety. The St. Albans edition would employ the *Fasciculus*, as well as similar themes, to a greatly different effect.

Visually, the St. Albans edition drew more heavily upon the structure of Caxton's continental source, the *Fasciculus Temporum*. Although neither Caxton nor the anonymous St. Albans compiler chose to transform the *Brut* text into a series of genealogical episodes, the St. Albans compiler grouped the material that he translated from the *Fasciculus* into chapters headed with the years (from the age of the world and to the birth of Christ) that the events began. He then interspersed these chapters, where possible or applicable, in with the chapters of the *Chronicles*. Furthermore, the compiler employed and commissioned woodcuts, modeled on those of the *Fasciculus*, to mark the division of time into the six ages, and also to mark the beginning of the *Brut*. He thus presented a unique and consistent visual scheme in which his edition of the *Chronicles*, and the legendary history of England within, could be understood.

One final aspect of the St. Albans edition deserves mention here in connection with the Latin *Brut*, namely its integration of other historical texts. In its compilation, the St. Albans supplemented the material taken from the *Fasciculus Temporum* with two significant borrowings of text from the *Polychronicon*. In his prologue to the edition, the St. Albans compiler borrowed from Higden's preface to the *Polychronicon*, emphasizing the correct reckoning of eras and dates in which events occurred, the "trew cowntyng of the yeris," as the key to proper historical knowledge.²⁴ Later on, he turns back to the *Polychronicon* for the

²⁴ *Chronicles of England* (St. Albans, c1486), sig. a²v-a³v, and compare Trevisa, *Polychronicon* (Westminster, 1482) sig. 21r-22r. Interestingly, the division of time into six ages has been removed from Higden's mnemonic by the St. Albans compiler, perhaps because he planned to divide the narrative of the *Chronicles* in seven parts, not six.

description of another key moment—perhaps *the* key moment in this conception of history—the Nativity. Both of these themes are shared between the *Fasciculus* and *Polychronicon*, and it appears that the Schoolmaster looked to the *Polychronicon* to supply a fuller account of Christ’s life and death. However, when the Schoolmaster describes the Magi’s arrival, he uncharacteristically breaks from his source text and refers to them “the iii kynges of Colan [Cologne],” which the *Polychronicon* does not do, and repeats the reference consistently through the episode.²⁵ In doing so, I believe that the St. Albans compiler was gesturing to a wider tradition most often considered in terms of its devotional aspect—the story of the translation of the Magi’s relics to Cologne—and emphasizing its relevance to British history. The wider popularity of the cult of the Magi had direct connections to two British figures: the Roman emperor Constantine and, more concretely, to his British mother, St. Helena, who had been responsible for translating their relics to Constantinople.

Helena had been a key figure in the Trojan history of Britain since Geoffrey of Monmouth had emphasized her high learning and wisdom and his vernacular translators had stressed her association with Constantine and her discovery of the True Cross.²⁶ Much in the way that earlier readers of the Latin and vernacular Bruts had taken note of her connections, the St. Albans compiler also recognized her value to his chronological program. Material on Constantine and Helena appears in one chapter of the *Chronicles* and two chapters that were composed from material in the *Fasciculus Temporum*. These chapters contain linking phrases inserted by the compiler, directing the reader to note Constantine’s connection to Britain’s throne through Helena, to the Roman Empire through his father, and to the Catholic Church through his supposed donation of the Western Empire to Pope Sylvester.

²⁵ *Chronicles of England* (St. Albans, c.1486), sig. f7v; Trevisa, *Polychronicon* (Westminster, 1482), sig. 23.5v.

²⁶ HRB V:137-42; *Roman de Brut*, 5719-5731.

Nor, as we have seen, was the literary tradition of St. Helena separate from the manuscript tradition of the *Brut*. Richard Osborn's translation of the *Three Kings* in Lambeth Palace MS 491, with its additional Latin poem on Helena's discovery of the true Cross, suggests that additional details could be associated with the figures of Helena and Constantine in Britain's early history. In London, British Library Cotton Galba E.VIII, the Middle English *Brut* is preceded by a text of the *Three Kings of Cologne*, this time entirely in Latin. The historical content of this copy of the *Three Kings*, however, has been expanded from that found Osborn's translation, containing not only the poetry glorifying Helena's discovery of the kings and their translation, but also a list of historical authorities on the Magi, as well as a series of chapters on Helena's travels in the Holy Land.²⁷

What we witness in the St. Albans compiler's use of sacred and British history is not the simple accretion of legend into history, or the grafting together of several historical texts. Rather, the Schoolmaster was intent on promoting a way of reading history as well as an individual history itself. The St. Albans edition of the *Chronicles* preserves, and formalizes, the vision of history common to the Latin *Brut* and its associated Middle English Peculiar *Bruts*. What is more, the Schoolmaster achieved this same effect not by copying a manuscript of the Latin *Brut*, but by creating a distinct compilation out of sources that he and Caxton shared. His activities, therefore, reflect the continuation of the manuscript tradition of the *Brut* as well as they do the exchange of active interpretation and promotion of a way of reading to convey the importance of Britain's ancient history and its relevance to a wider historical and confessional context. Likewise, what we observe from the activities of both printers in the 1480s is not the rote reproduction of a stale historical narrative, but their promotion of two very important elements in an existing chronicle tradition. Thus, while

²⁷ London, BL MS Cotton Galba E.VIII, fols. 3r-28v; the poem is on fol. 28r.

both editions are “print productions,” the impulse that produced them was not restricted to printers. Together, they reflect participation in a program of reading and learning in which history played a central role.

I. A Program of Printing for “Diverse Gentlemen:” Historical Printing in the 1480s

Caxton’s printing of the *Chronicles* “at request of diverse gentlemen,” as his prologue states, is an oft-quoted refrain, the reuse of which begins with Caxton himself. The most common explanation of this is that it is a rhetorical formula of Caxton’s, created for marketing purposes.²⁸ From this point of view, the production of the *Chronicles* is *fait accompli*: Caxton chose a history that was widely popular in manuscript because he knew that its appeal would be worth the financial risk. Other printers then followed suit, having observed the success Caxton enjoyed. Yet, we have seen that a good deal more than economic consideration went into the printing of some of the earliest editions of the *Chronicles*. Furthermore, even for an emerging printer, let alone an established and savvy businessman like Caxton, the decision to print or not to print a text could not have been an isolated one. Even if Caxton’s formula is a platitude (which it almost certainly is), what else might the early English printers have expected their anonymous consumers to buy?

Anthologizing works for sale is an area where studies of manuscript and print production begin to overlap. The ability of presses to produce unbound copies of short works has led scholars of early modern printing to think about the reception of many texts

²⁸ See N.F. Blake, *Caxton’s Own Prose* (London: André Deutsch, 1973), 30-31. and W. Kuskin, ed. *Caxton’s Trace: Studies in the History of English Printing* (South Bend, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2006) 1-31. For ease of reference, citations to Caxton’s prologues and epilogues use the edited versions provided by Blake in *Caxton’s Own Prose* (hereafter *CP*), spellings are currently modernized.

within a single book, much like manuscript miscellanies. Two main limitations exist at the moment for the assessment of historical works in particular. First, in a similar manner to studies of manuscript miscellanies, the scholars interested in undertaking this work are scholars of literature. Thus, while histories are discussed in connection with manuscript or print compilations, they often take an ancillary role to literary and, especially, poetic works whose length would appear to lend them more to bulk purchase and binding.²⁹ Additionally, since the chronological foci of these studies has begun with print production, anthologies that contain both manuscript and printed works tend to be used as evidence of the transition from one culture to another, rather than the continuing exchange between them. The study of the *Brut* tradition then, provides a valuable antecedent for reading and compiling to these later works.

I hope that the discussion of manuscript circulation has made clear that there was, or could be, no one ready-made “digest” of history and other interests, and the printing press did not alter this fact. Early printers made use of the parallel interests of their readers and the connections between texts. Whether due to their own knowledge of literature, their observation of the tastes of their readers (or the use of their books as copy-texts), the printers of fifteenth- and sixteenth-century London, as well as their European colleagues, greatly accelerated and intensified the developments taking place in the manuscript tradition. What follows is a preliminary investigation into the interaction between printed histories, and other printed texts not considered to belong to the domain of historians. By taking these materials into account, I aim to investigate the print shop as a space for intellectual

²⁹ A. Gillespie, “Poets, Printers, and Early English *Sammelbände*,” *Huntington Library Quarterly* 67 (2004): 189-214; J. Knight, *Bound to Read: Compilations, Collections, and the Making of Renaissance Literature* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013); Boffey, *Manuscript and Print* 45-76, 125-51.

collaboration as well as mechanical production and reproduction, expanding the roles traditionally attributed to printers and their laborers.³⁰

In this discussion, I wish to call attention to a number of other vernacular texts printed during the early 1480s by Caxton and his contemporaries in the London area. This period, roughly bookended by the printing of Caxton's and the St. Albans editions of the *Chronicles*, witnessed the sporadic operation of several English printers. While disparate, I hope to show that the printing of these historical, moral, didactic, and devotional texts was complementary to the production of the *Chronicles of England*. Nor, I argue, was the decision to print entirely divorced from current events or isolated from a printer's past production or that of his competitors. I will then turn to an examination of individual *Brut* manuscripts that most reflect the influence of print, as well as copies of the printed *Chronicles* that respond to changes in the manuscript tradition of the *Brut* highlighted in the previous two chapters.

In the opening years of the decade, Caxton's press produced his only chronicle histories: the *Chronicles of England* (1480 and 1482); the *Description of England* (1480), a short text adapted from the *Polychronicon*, and his edition of the *Polychronicon* itself (1482). The links between the *Polychronicon* and the *Chronicles* have already been mentioned, but the *Description of England*, itself adapted from the *Polychronicon*, solidified them further. This work calls attention to the ubiquity of the "common chronicles of England," while it claims to address a lacuna (the lack of a geographical account of the kingdoms of Britain, their cities, and

³⁰ The intellectual community of some European print shops—notably those of Aldus Manutius and Christophe Plantin press—has already been acknowledged, largely because of their decisions to produce scholarly texts. I suggest that the community of authors and scholars for hire that surrounded these presses and bookshops (as correctors, translators for hire, and customers) also existed for presses that did not produce erudite Latin and Greek works.

marvels) in them. Unsurprisingly, it is often found bound together with surviving copies of Caxton's editions, and later printers often included the text in their editions as well.³¹

Moving outward, we come to a series of Caxton's texts that are most commonly considered as a cycle of romances: *Godfrey de Boloyne* (1481), adapted from a French translation of William of Tyre's history of the first Crusade, the *Morte D'Arthur* (1485), and the *History of Charles the Great* (1485). These texts all view history, in part, through the lens of the Nine Worthies: the famed conquerors of pagan antiquity, the Old Testament, and the Christian Era. The later prefaces also link the texts to one another both directly—the preface to *Charles the Great* refers its readers to the *Morte*, printed earlier in the year—and thematically through a more general interest in chivalric pursuits and crusading.

We know from the study of Caxton's *Morte D'Arthur* that the printer incorporated details drawn from the *Chronicles* in his description of Arthur's battle with Rome.³² Furthermore, in the preface to that work (also dedicated to “diverse noble gentlemen”), Caxton provides a brief defense of Arthur's historical accuracy, foreshadowing a debate that would intensify in the sixteenth century.³³ In a similar manner, the prologue to *Godfrey* stresses the usefulness of this history at a time when Christianity is threatened by “miscreants and Turks,” the same crisis that gave structure to his continuation in the *Chronicles*. Likewise, another text shows that the threat of Ottoman expansion appears to have been more widely felt around the time Caxton was compiling his edition of the *Chronicles* and *Godfrey*. In 1482 or 1483 an English translation of *The Siege of Rhodes* was issued

³¹CP, 72.

³² M. Takagi and T. Takamiya, “Caxton Edits the Roman War Episode: The *Chronicles of England* and Caxton's Book V,” in *The Malory Debate: Essays on the Texts of le Morte Darthur*, ed. R. Kindrick and M. Salda (Cambridge, 2000), 169-191.

³³ CP, 72, and see Chapter 6.

by an anonymous printer, the sole work of his press.³⁴ This poem commemorating the successful defense of Rhodes from Mehmet II in late 1480 may have been seen by its printer as a sound choice not only for its topical relevance, but also for its connection to Caxton's historical works of 1481-1482.

One final group of texts deserves consideration as well: treatises suited to moral and political education. Immediately after the *Description of Britain*, Caxton produced a translation of several Ciceronian orations called *The Declamation of Noblesse* (1481), and in the period between 1483 and 1485 he printed the moral proverbs of Cato (1483 and 1484), his second edition of the *Game of Chess* (1483), the *Curial* (1483), and Lydgate's *Court of Sapience* (1484). All of these texts call attention to the use of history as wise counsel, at a time when Caxton and others may have felt such counsel to be lacking. In the *Declamation*, Caxton presents the work as useful not only because Cicero draws on the precepts of Cato, but also because of Cicero's interest in the 'public weal' (*res publica*). Caxton also argues for a more expansive audience than the aged and noble. The histories in the *Declamation*, he claims, should also be read by "noble, wyse and grete lords, gentilmen and marchauntes that have seen and dayly ben occupied in maters towchyng the publyque weal."³⁵

Between 1483 and 1485 the public weal was in jeopardy. Edward IV died, and following a short period of guardianship, his brother Richard deposed Edward's young son (whom he likely had murdered). Less than two years later, Richard was in turn deposed by Henry Tudor, who defeated Richard at the Battle of Bosworth in August of 1485. Despite his claims to be continuing the stability of Edward IV's governance, Richard's opponents at Bosworth included many key members of the late king's household, and Richard repeatedly

³⁴ BMC XI 263.

³⁵ CP, 121.

set himself against what he perceived to be the machinations of the Woodvilles. He thus deposed the heir and family of the most frequent dedicatees of Caxton's early works. Caxton's colophon to *Charles the Great* becomes a mini history of this transition and the speed at which it took place, noting that it was undertaken during the reign of Edward IV "our natural and sovereign lord late of noble memory," finished in late June of 1485, during the reign of Richard III, and printed in December, under the reign of Henry VII.³⁶

It may be for this reason that we see changes in Caxton's "re-printed" works between 1483-85. When Caxton's second edition of the *Game of Chess* appeared, it was stripped of its dedication to George Duke of Clarence (who had been accused of treason and executed by Edward in 1479) and was instead dedicated to "people of every estate and degree."³⁷ While the text had always been a meditation on order and propriety, this new edition preserved several interpolations specifically lamenting the damage done to the English realm by self-interest³⁸ Caxton followed the *Game of Chess* with another text critical of the (French) court, the *Curial*. In 1484, Lydgate's *Court of Sapience* was accompanied by an introduction comparing the moral governance of oneself, one's household, and one's realm, to a game of chess. These editions were produced in a smaller format that might have encouraged buyers to purchase multiple titles and have them bound together. In at least one surviving book, all of these texts are gathered in this manner.³⁹

The final text in this group, Caxton's 1484 edition of *Cato*, was the fourth edition of a steady-selling text for the English printer. In a manner similar to the *Game of Chess*, this edition was also revised from that which had appeared only a year before. Caxton not only

³⁶ CP, 68.

³⁷ CP, 87.

³⁸ *ibid.*

³⁹ London, BL IB 55034. See BMC XI, 133.

re-arranged the maxims for ease of reference, but also expanded the content of *Cato* “with some additions and authorities of holy doctors and prophets, and also many histories and examples authentic of holy fathers and ancient chronicles true and approved.”⁴⁰ Its intended audience was also broad. Caxton dedicated the work to the City of London, assuming the role of counselor to the citizens

for, as it seems to me, it [the book] is of great need, by cause I have known it [i.e. London] in my young age much more wealthy, prosperous and richer than it is at this day. And the cause is that there is almost none that entendeth to the common weal but only every man for his singular profit.⁴¹

The proverbs of Cato, promoted by Caxton in his other works, now hinted at a broader political and social need for good governance, and the later history of the *Brut* would remind Londoners how key to the proper functioning of England’s commonwealth they had been in the past.

It is true that, at least for Caxton’s editions of classical authors, the message of these texts relied upon histories that were not British, or even English. Yet if we look at them collectively, we get a sense of the role that English history played within Caxton’s wider program of printing. We may also understand why Caxton would have thought it necessary to expand a work like the *Brut* and bring it to press. If we turn to the middle of the period, to the vision of history Caxton promotes in his introduction to the *Polychronicon*, we witness history as a thread that draws political education and Christian chivalry together.

Histories ought not only to be judged most profitable to young men which by the lecture, reading and understanding make them semblable and equal to men of greater age and to old men...but also *th’histories able and make right private men deserving and worthy to have the governance of empires and noble realms...* Histories also have moved right noble knights to deserve eternal laud, which follow them for their victorious merits, and cause them more valiantly to entre in

⁴⁰ *CP*, 65.

⁴¹ *CP*, 63.

jeopardies of battles for the defense and tuition of their country and public weal.⁴² (emphasis mine)

This was the type of history promoted by Caxton to the ‘diverse gentlemen’ who entered his printing shop. The counsel offered to his readers by these works was moral and just; it was also “politick,” and available to a wide audience of nobles, merchants, courtiers, and parliamentarians. If Caxton was inserting the affairs of the wider world (or at least of European Christianity) into the *Chronicles of England*, he was also inserting the history of England into a wider literary program by adding historical material into his editions of the *Morte D’Arthur* and the *Golden Legend* and using the examples of ancient history to comment on the present in works like *Cato*.

Though its output was much more limited, the St. Albans press was perhaps the most experimental and innovative operation in England’s first decade of printing. Only two vernacular texts issued from the press: the first was the expanded edition of the *Chronicles* around 1486, followed by the *Book of Hawking, Hunting and the Blazing of Arms*. Both these works represented a break with tradition: first in the press’ previous practice of printing Latin works, and second in their use of illustration and compilation. We may safely add these two works to the reading list of Caxton’s diverse gentlemen.

While the content and layout of the *Chronicles* have already been discussed, the St. Albans press experimented with different printing techniques and materials. A copy of the *Chronicles* now in the Huntington Library was printed on vellum, the only surviving example of its kind, and to my knowledge the only time that an edition of the *Chronicles* was printed

⁴² CP, 129.

on a medium other than paper.⁴³ In order to make the work more closely resemble a manuscript, pricking has been added to the outside of the text block, to simulate the lines that would have been ruled by a scribe. Although the use of parchment would have made it more expensive to produce, this copy does not appear to be particularly lavish. While extra care had to be taken to avoid smudging the ink, parts of the book, notably the large initials, remain unfinished, thereby suggesting that this copy may have been either a trial run or a presentation copy with errors, although minimal, that prevented it from being given to its patron.

In both the *Chronicles* and the *Book of Hawking*, printed rubrication was employed. Whereas in the *Chronicles* the use of red ink was limited to initials and the strokes between paragraphs (¶) and individual letters (mimicking a scribal technique for capitalization), in the *Book of Hawking* the printers employ woodcuts in red and black ink to display the different coats of arms. The printing process would likely have involved carefully masking off the portions of each forme (typeset page) that were not to be printed in the opposite color, as well as ensuring that the impression in each color lined up precisely on the page. In both of these books, readers were presented with a visually appealing and innovative combination of topics, from history and religion to leisure and heraldry. While no additional books were produced by the St. Albans press after 1486, as with Caxton's works, their influence extended well beyond the short run of the press.

⁴³ Huntington Library HM 82875. A copy in the John Rylands Library, Manchester, (Rylands 15397) is described by its catalogue as being on vellum and illuminated, but it appears that the copy is on paper. I am grateful to Christopher Heath for examining this book for me.

II. The Next Generation: Printers, Readers and Writers to 1535

Like the manuscripts that came before them, the historical material from England's early printers found its way into varied hands over the next several decades. Seven more editions of the *Chronicles of England* would appear before 1530, the majority from just two printers. While no more modifications to the text were forthcoming, the material from the *Chronicles* found its way into additional printed works, as new communities of 'diverse gentlemen' made it part of their learning.

At the end of the fifteenth century, printing remained a fairly concentrated industry within England. Geographically, it was confined to London, Westminster, and Oxford.⁴⁴ Linguistically, vernacular texts continued to dominate English production, as Latin works could be more readily obtained on the continent. Yet even though England's presses produced works in English, nearly all were run by foreign-born operators. Following Caxton's death in 1492, his longtime assistant, Wynkyn de Worde, took over the operation of the shop. For most of the decade, de Worde continued using Caxton's printer's device, before incorporating it into his own. Of Caxton's competitors, only Richard Pynson and Julian Notary remained, and of these two it would be Pynson who endured the longest. These two presses, De Worde's and Pynson's, would continue to dominate England's printing landscape until the death of both printers within five years of each other. Over more than three decades, the presses of Pynson and de Worde produced over one thousand editions between them, mostly of vernacular texts. Though they remain less well known figures than Caxton, these two men had arguably a larger influence on the development of English literature and the standardization of the English language.

⁴⁴ Hellinga, *William Caxton*, 1-5 and ; Boffey, *Manuscript and Print*, 17-28.

As Caxton had done, De Worde continued to issue editions of the *Chronicles of England* and the *Polychronicon*. De Worde's editions slowly modified Caxton's texts and his program of printing. His editions of the *Chronicles* included the expanded St. Albans material, and he eventually produced his own editions of the *Book of Hunting and Hawking* as well, to which he added a treatise on fishing.⁴⁵ Aside from the numerous statutes, proclamations, grammars, and indulgences that formed the stable income that all printers needed, De Worde's output contains a large proportion of devotional texts.⁴⁶ These productions ranged from small treatises to some of the lengthier volumes like the *Golden Legend*, which Caxton had produced.

Though not a translator himself, De Worde did introduce additional developments to England's historical landscape. His editions of the *Chronicles*, though they contained no further continuations, were increasingly illustrated with woodcuts, as were many of the other productions of De Worde's press. As was common among most early printers, these woodcuts were in large part recycled from a large number of printed books, but added an additional visual element to the *Chronicles* that had not been present in the printed editions, as well as in the vast majority of the manuscripts. Surveying his output as a whole, De Worde appears to have produced historical texts in concentrated periods. In 1502, he produced editions of the *Polychronicon* and the *Chronicles*, along with an edition of the *Receuil de Troye*, another of Caxton's classic vernacular texts. He also appears to have responded to the productions of other presses. His 1515 edition of the *Chronicles* appeared in the same year as an edition from Julian Notary, and a range of texts that might be compatible with the history

⁴⁵ For descriptions of the early versions of these works, see *BMC XI*, 203, 212, and 214.

⁴⁶ Hellinga, *William Caxton*, 163-4.

in the *Chronicles* appeared around the production of Richard Pynson's 1510 edition of the same.

His main development, however, was adapting material from the *Chronicles* into smaller works, as well as producing some of the parallel text with figures identifiable from the St. Albans edition. Many of these works deal with devotional topics, in keeping with the overall production of his press. Yet as Caxton had with his romances, De Worde found, and exploited, parallels between the works his press and those of his contemporaries produced. In 1509, he produced a short text called *The Life of St. Ursula, after the Chronicles of England*. The story of Ursula and the 11,000 virgins martyred in Cologne had long been a point of interest in the manuscript tradition of the *Brut*, as well as a feature of the *Golden Legend*. Despite the title, one of the aims of the work is to explain why the account in the *Chronicles* differs from the legend.⁴⁷ In 1510 and 1511, De Worde printed two works touching on the history of Joseph of Arimathea: the *Siege of Jerusalem*, a short poem ending with the succession of Vespasian after Nero, and the longer *Treatise of Joseph of Arimathea*, of which about half was dedicated to Joseph's activities in England.

Finally, De Worde printed another work that dealt with another famous British saint: St. Helena. His edition of the *Three Kings of Cologne* printed the fourteenth-century translation of Jacobus de Voragine. For an English audience, this work would be a mix of devotional, travel, and historical literature. It tells the story of the nativity from the Gospel, as well as tracing the journey of the Magi from the east and back, describing the kingdoms of India and their rule under Prester John. Finally, the *Three Kings* tells also of the discovery of their relics, including the True Cross, by Constantine's mother St. Helena, while she traveled in

⁴⁷ *Life of St. Ursula* (Westminster: Wynkyn De Worde, 1509), sig. A2r.

the Holy Land. As mentioned above, this episode was not only an important event in the cult of St. Helen, but also a key intersection between the narrative of England's history in the *Brut* and a wider body of literature, dating back, at least, to the early fifteenth century. De Worde's editions thus made it more likely that English readers would encounter excerpted portions of England's history, much in the way that the small portions of poetry migrated between Latin and vernacular versions of the *Brut*.

Richard Pynson, unlike De Worde, maintained close connections with the Crown and court for his entire career. His printing business appears to have begun between 1491 and 1492, and it took off in the temporary lull caused by Caxton's death. Pynson specialized in producing legal texts in French and English, a steady and proprietary stream of income. However, his early production show the influence of England's politics. Aside from an edition of the *Canterbury Tales*, his first editions had obvious ties to England's growing rivalry with France. The *Statutes of War* (1492) was produced at the behest of Henry VII to support his imminent invasion of Brittany, and Pynson's connections within the court grew over the years, until in 1506/7 he began producing texts under the title of "King's Printer."

Pynson's most innovative period of historical production came between 1510 and 1518, when he first produced an edition of the *Chronicles of England*. This edition, as mentioned, was followed by a large number of parallel texts from De Worde's press, to which Pynson added his own edition of the *History, Siege, and Destruction of Troy* (1513). Again, political developments may be seen to drive the production of these texts. As the new monarch, Henry VIII, prepared for a campaign against the French, Pynson produced a short verse treatise, *The Gardener's Passetaunce Touching the Outrage of France* (1512). Henry's accession and campaign likely drove historical production all through this decade, and it was

perhaps in keeping with these policies that Pynson produced what aimed to be the most comprehensive and updated history available on the market: the *New Chronicles of England and France*, which later became known as *Fabyan's Chronicle*.

Compiled in London around 1509, *Fabyan's Chronicle* epitomized the trend of compiling and reconciling England's history with the historical traditions around it, observed in both the Latin *Bruts* and the printed editions of the *Chronicles of England*. Its author, the London draper Robert Fabyan, sought to compile a work to match the history of the French kings from the fourth century with Britain's history from Brutus to the death of Henry VII and that could be amended such "that it with old Auctors may gree in every poynt." As with the Latin *Brut* and the *Fruit of Times*, the first part of the Chronicle contained an account of the years from the creation of the world to the birth of Christ, the fall of Troy, and the arrival of Brutus in Britain.⁴⁸

Pynson was also the first printer to produce an epitome of the *Chronicles*, listing the succession of England's kings and their reigns.⁴⁹ The other London printers would follow suit, producing what would become a new genre of historical material. These small booklets (of eight pages or less) may have originated with verses like Lydgate's summary of England's kings since the Conquest, but they were likely intended to be bound in with other works or made widely available. By 1535 the first broadsheet edition of these epitomes chronicles had appeared. However tempting it may be to lump these works in with "cheap print" and other ephemeral genres, these texts might be seen as a supplement to historical reading,

⁴⁸ Boffey, *Manuscript and Print*, 162-204. The prologue also sought to discredit the Albina narrative on chronological grounds, as Hardyng had, but without looking to preserve the moral value of the work. See Ruch, *Albina and Her Sisters*, 133.

⁴⁹ STC 9983.3. Pynson's work inspired De Worde to undertake a similar summary in 1530.

particularly that of the larger chronicle texts, rather than the replacement of longer chronicles by shorter works.⁵⁰

The output of England's early printers, then, expanded the range of texts that could be connected to Britain's ancient history. As the sixteenth-century printers adapted and excerpted pieces of Britain's past, however, they did not diminish the need to understand the whole or, in the case of *Fabyan's Chronicle*, to reconcile it with the increasing variety of historical texts now available to English readers. The inclusion of chronology and comparative history, even in the shortest works, represents a trend in historical reading that had been growing since the "universalizing" Latin works of the fourteenth century, and was now available, and perhaps even expected. The consequences of such a variety of "histories," from those of England to that of St. Ursula, would strain the use of chronology and compilation as a basis for criticism.

It must also be stressed that England's printers were never alone, even in the production of English historical texts. The business of printing England's history, and indeed, the knowledge of Britain's early kings, spread across the presses of Europe as well as its readers. The collaborations between Caxton and his counterparts in the Low Countries continued through his career. At the same time that Pynson was establishing his press, his edition of the *Statutes of War* was followed by a series of English chivalric and historical material from the Antwerp printer Gerard Leeu. Leeu had speculated in Latin texts for the English market, but his edition of the *Chronicles of England* (the last to be based off of Caxton's) capped a series of works that began with the satirical *Dialogue between Solomon and Marcolphus*, where a rude peasant makes a fool of the wise monarch, and included the history

⁵⁰ T. Watt, *Cheap Print and Popular Piety 1550-1640* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991). Watt, however, notes that even "periodical literature" could be considered not as disposable but as "the printed artefact acting as an aid to memory" (330), a role that summary chronicles would without doubt also fill.

of Jason and the Romance of Paris and Vienne. All of these works were produced with woodcut title pages, giving a uniform appearance that De Worde would experiment with in his first edition of the *Chronicles*.

In 1508, close to four centuries after the composition of Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia*, the text appeared in print from the press of Josse Bade, or as he titled himself, Badus Ascensius. Geoffrey's newest edition was the work of the English scholar Ivo Cavellatus, who edited the text from Parisian copies of the *Historia*. One final work from the press of Badus Ascensius merits mention in connection with England's historical literature. In 1521, following the ascent of James V to the throne of Scotland, Ascensius printed an edition of John Major's *Historia Maioris Britanniae*, with two accompanying dedications to the monarch: one by himself and one by Major. As the sixteenth century progressed, more English authors and scholars would look to have their works printed across the Channel, particularly those engaged in the exchange of humanist letters with Europe's universities and thinkers.

Material about the Britons found its way into European histories as well, beginning with the *Fasciculus Temporum*. Johan Veldener's editions of the *Fasciculus* were popular across Europe and England in the 1470s, and in 1480 Veldener produced a Dutch edition of the history *Dat Boek dat Men Heit Fasciculus Temporum*. In addition to the history of popes and emperors, Veldener's edition included the genealogies of Britain and France, as well as the dukes of Brabant, all arrayed in separate diagrams following the *Fasciculus*. The descent of the British kings ran from Brutus to Edward IV, but it paid particular attention to the branches

of the Plantagenets descended from Edward III and his sons.⁵¹ This diagram not only summarized the competing claims of the Wars of the Roses, but also the claims of England to France's throne. In 1513, Henri Petit printed a chronicle of French history compiled by Sigebert de Gembloux that contains additions drawn from Geoffrey of Monmouth. Sigebert's history begins with the unified descent of mankind, separating it into nine kingdoms. In ascribing Trojan origins to the Franks and Britons, he summarizes the descent of Brutus, the division of Britain among his sons, the conversion of the island to Christianity under Lucius, and the descent of Arthur.

The production and modification of England's history, therefore, was greater than the sum total of editions by individual printers, copies in circulation, or even the production in one particular language. The printing of editions like the St. Albans *Chronicles* drew related historical works like the *Brut* and the *Polychronicon* closer together, even as they alerted their readers to a range of material beyond the English or Latin chronicle where history could be found. Although the editions of large chronicle works appear "fixed" in terms of their text, their reception and use by different printers was constantly in flux: modified by the texts produced before and after and, as we shall see, bound in different combinations by their readers. Above all, the exchange, intellectual as well as economic, that took place between Europe's first printers and their companions in England had the effect of widening the appeal of history, both in its scope and its audience.

⁵¹ Rolevinck, Werner, *Dat Boek dat men heit Fasciculus Temporum*. (Utrecht: Johan Veldener, 1480), fols. 218r-231v. On fols. 227v-229v, the chronicle diagrams the descendants of Edward III, providing biographical information about each of his sons.

III. Beyond the Printing House

Seven manuscripts of the *Brut* show the direct influence of the printed *Chronicles* through the incorporation of all or part of the continuation from 1419-1461.⁵² These manuscripts, in turn, are part of a larger subset that suggest the impact of printed works on their content and provide immediate evidence that readers of earlier *Brut* manuscripts were updating their books, either with the additional chronicle text or as part of larger and more substantive revisions.

Two of these manuscripts illustrate the process particularly well. The first, Huntington Library MS HM 136, provided Caxton with his copy-text for the *Chronicles of England* to 1419.⁵³ Ironically, only part of Caxton's printed continuation—his chapters praising Henry V—was later added back into the manuscript.⁵⁴ In addition to Caxton, HM 136's margins and flyleaves preserve the record of a series of other owners, ranging from the original owner of the book to the seventeenth century. One of these owners, a woman named Dorothy Helbarton, has received more mention than all of the others, likely due to the fact that she mentioned herself (or had someone inscribe her ownership) dozens of times in the upper margins.⁵⁵ However, it is the earliest two (perhaps three) owners, owners whose annotations have largely passed without comment, who took the most measured interest in engaging with the history of the *Brut* in connection with other texts.

⁵² Matheson, "Printer and Scribe," 595; idem., *PB* 157-72.

⁵³ D. Wakelin, "Caxton's Exemplar," 80-87.

⁵⁴ HM 136, fols. 156v-158r. Wakelin suggests that this manuscript was borrowed by Caxton and thus not heavily marked by the printing process. Some of the changes his *Chronicles* made to the text of HM 136 were later incorporated. ("Caxton's Exemplar," 93-94.)

⁵⁵ Her inscriptions likely date from the second half of the sixteenth century. See A. Vines, "This Ys Her Owne Boke: Women Reading the Middle English Prose *Brut* Chronicle," *Trivium* 36 (2006): 71-96; A. Bale, "Belligerent Literacy, Bookplates and Graffiti: Dorothy Helbarton's Book," in G. Partington and A. Smyth ed., *Book Destruction from the Medieval to the Contemporary* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 89-111.

The earliest named owner of this manuscript gives his name as John Leche of Cheshire. Anthony Bale has traced Leche's ownership inscription to several other books, both manuscript and print, and concluded that Leche most likely lived between 1480 and 1553, and he became a member of Lincoln's Inn in 1508, around which time he likely acquired MS 136.⁵⁶ By this time, the manuscript may have already had a short series of Latin couplets commemorating the kings from William the Conqueror to Henry VI, as well as a series of additional verse prophecies spread out across its narrative of events from Edward II to Henry IV.⁵⁷ The prophecies pick up where Merlin's prophecies end in the *Brut* and are attributed to the "same author"—not Merlin, but John of Bridlington, whom the annotator attributed the earlier fourteenth-century prophecies in the *Brut*.⁵⁸

Leche's gloss to the text of the *Brut*, however, reveals a further aspect of his reading. From differences in his hand and in the ink of his annotations, it appears that he read through the book at least twice, marking the text at two separate occasions. First, he provided a basic narrative gloss, copying out the names of places, figures, and noting the failure in the line of British kings as well as developments in the history of the Church. Leche shared this initial step with many of the readers of the *Brut*. The second time around, however, Leche incorporated chronological references into the margins, likely taken from the *Polychronicon*, often in contrast to the dates that the *Brut* provided for events. He then used his own chronological framework to add further information drawn from the

⁵⁶ A. Bale, "Late Medieval Book Owners named John Leche," *Bodleian Library Record* 25 (2012): 105-112.

⁵⁷ Bale suggests that these were added by Leche. I have not been able to view the other manuscripts that Leche annotated, but two details in HM 136 give me pause in accepting his conclusions. First, although Leche wrote in several different styles of hand, and his cursive hand changes from location to location, his gloss of MS HM 136 and his inscription in HM 14169 nearly always uses a secretary "r" form, with no descender, as well as a secretary a, while the hand that copied the verses and prophecies prefers the anglicana forms (single compartment a with a headstroke - this a, just in case you're curious - and r with a descender) which the hand of the prophecies uses frequently. Secondly, Leche doesn't mark any of the original prophecies of Merlin in the *Brut* or their consequences. It is, however, possible that his interests changed along with his handwriting.

⁵⁸ MS HM 136, fols. 83v-84r. See M. Curley, "The Cloak of Anonymity and the Prophecy of John of Bridlington," *Modern Philology* 77 (1980): 361-9, 363-4.

Polychronicon, as well as specific references to that text. Leche's annotations in HM 136 are nowhere near as obtrusive as Dorothy Helbarton's, but they are far more valuable for our understanding of historical reading. Leche continued to read histories all throughout his life, but more importantly for us, he re-read histories, using the manuscript of the *Brut* as a framework for further learning.

The front flyleaves of MS HM 136 also contain another set of Latin verses and epitaphs written by a different hand than Leche's, that include the *Oratio Bruti ad Dianam*.⁵⁹ Julia Boffey suggests that these were drawn in part from a printed edition of the *New Chronicles*, which contained the Latin epitaphs as well as Robert Fabyan's English translations.⁶⁰ If the second hand on the flyleaves represents an owner after Leche, then this could certainly be the case. However, the circulation of the epitaphs and prophecies in Latin and English *Brut* manuscripts presents another possibility for the incorporation of epitaphs and prophecies into MS HM 136. Both scenarios place the manuscript among a group of sixteenth-century owners who were actively involved in comparing, critiquing, and expanding their own historical knowledge, using both English and Latin books and manuscripts.

Associations with the *Polychronicon*, in both its printed and manuscript versions, are also common in this group of manuscripts.⁶¹ University of Glasgow Library MS Hunter 83

⁵⁹ MS HM 136, fols. iir, iiir.

⁶⁰ Boffey, *Manuscript and Print*, 203.

⁶¹ The ways which these texts incorporate the material varies. London, British Library, MS Additional 10099, contains extracts from the *Polychronicon* bound in after the copy of the *Brut* (fols. 213r-226v), as well as a hand-copied *Tabula* on its final folios (236r-246v). The items in the *Tabula* do not appear to have been copied from Caxton's edition, since they do not contain the entries from his final book, the *Liber Ultimus*, but they do cover much more material than the short extracts from the work which are copied earlier in the manuscript. London Lambeth Palace MS 84 was thoroughly updated using material from Caxton's *Polychronicon*, with the scribe pasting in slips of text in some places. Lambeth 84 also contains Arthurian material not found in other *Brut* manuscripts, (199v-202) as well as an incomplete program of illumination modeled after that found in Laud Misc 733.

clearly shows the influence of both Caxton's printed *Polychronicon* and the St. Albans edition of the *Chronicles of England*. This manuscript has been continued from an earlier version through inclusion of the *Liber Ultimus* after 1419 and the material adapted by the St. Albans compiler from the *Fasciculus Temporum* in the beginning, including a hand-drawn image of one of the edition's woodcuts.⁶² Furthermore, the continuator has gone through the early parts of the *Brut* and annotated the margins to reflect the chronology in the St. Albans edition. The compiler's use of sources has led Julia Boffey to describe the manuscript, which later circulated among a London mercantile audience, as "effectively a whole new work."⁶³

Viewed in light of the manuscript tradition alone, MS Hunter 83 is indeed a unique re-combination of texts, as are many of the *Brut* manuscripts discussed in this chapter. However, when the early printed editions are taken into account, it becomes evident that the exchange between the two media reflects a broader understanding of history and historical inquiry just as it hints that the differences between manuscript and book were insignificant for many late-fifteenth-century readers. Indeed, we may see a fitting counterpart to MS Hunter 83 in a surviving printed copy of Caxton's 1480 edition of the *Chronicles*, Lambeth Palace ZZ 1480.2, in which a neat, professional hand of the late fifteenth century has copied the Latin orations between Brutus and Diana, along with other Latin verses commemorating Cordelia's prudence, Lucius' baptism, Arthur's downfall, and king Alured's laws into the margins of the book.⁶⁴

The impact of printed material on the manuscript tradition of reading history can be observed both directly, through the copying of printed texts into manuscripts, and indirectly,

⁶² Glasgow, University of Glasgow Library MS Hunter 83, fol. 4r.

⁶³ Boffey, *Manuscript and Print*, p. 61; B. Sinclair, "In Pursuit of the *Brut*: Identity, Landscape, and Location with Particular Emphasis on Glasgow University Library Hunterian MS 83" (Unpublished PhD dissertation, Queens University, Belfast, 2008), 217.

⁶⁴ London, Lambeth Palace ZZ 1480.2, sigs. a4v, b1v, b8r, e5r, and f7v.

through the compilation and choice of texts of late medieval manuscript anthologies.

Harvard, MS Eng. 530 provides an excellent example of both practices at work. The longest text in the book is a copy of the *Brut* that ran to 1439. The *Brut* to 1419 was the work of at least two fourteenth-century scribes, and the continuation after that point was drawn from Caxton's continuation of the *Chronicles*, appended to the *Brut* by a contemporary copyist.⁶⁵

The manuscript contains a mixture of historical, moral, and political texts which were produced in separate sections, but, given the annotation that runs through them, were likely encountered as a set at or around the time that the Caxton's text was continued.⁶⁶

The six works which now comprise MS Eng. 530 were originally produced in three separate booklets. The first contains texts which may have appealed to the piety and recreation of a lay reader: *The Complaint of Christ*, a poem by William Lichfield, took the form of a dialogue between Christ and man urging him to "make amends before you die," a section of John Lydgate's verse romance, *Guy of Warwick*, and the Middle English prose *Three Kings of Cologne*. The second two texts—Lydgate's *Serpent of Division*, a meditation on discord, and the *Governance of Princes*—fit the growing category of advice literature for monarchs. The last booklet contains the *Brut* and its continuation. Since the annotations present in MS Eng. 530 do not explicitly reference the other texts in the volume, it is possible to envision the sections as three separate sets of interest, bound for convenience, rather than intent.

As we have seen in the earlier chapters, however, thematic as well as authorial links may bind the manuscript together in a reader's mind, with the history of the *Brut* providing a template into which they may be fit. Treating the texts in MS 530 as a consistent whole and

⁶⁵ Matheson, *PB*, 164 and 257-59.

⁶⁶ Stephen Partridge, 'The Legacy of John Shirley: Revisiting Houghton MS Eng 530' in *New Directions in Manuscript Studies and Reading Practices: Studies in Honor of Derek Pearsall*, ed. K. Kerby-Fulton and J. Thompson (South Bend, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2014), 425-45.

also might explain some of the editorial choices in the manuscript. The excerpt of *Guy of Warwick*, for example, deals exclusively with Guy's presence in England under king Athelstan (even though the *Brut* would caution the reader against treating this association as historical).⁶⁷ The connections between the *Three Kings* and the *Brut* have already been noted in the preceding chapters. As a whole, the manuscript provides Christian, classical, European, and English examples of good governance, with the content intersecting with the legendary history of Britain at familiar points: Constantine and Helena, Julius Caesar. The title *Governance of Princes* is somewhat misleading, for the text describes how managers of households and estates, not just the rulers of kingdoms, should all employ good self-governance, following just example. The combination of texts in MS Eng. 530 thus joins several threads together and complements a reading of history similar to that which Caxton was trying to promote.

A similar combination of poetry and history can be found across two manuscripts owned by the Gainsford family of Surrey in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. Beginning with Sir John Gainsford (d.1450) and his two surviving sons, the Gainsfords would remain in the orbit of the royal court for nearly a century. One of the books is a copy of the *Brut*, London, British Library MS Royal 18 B III, and it also records several generations of family annotations, including the birth of Sir John's grandson, Erasmus Gainsford, in 1536. The other manuscript, now among the Ellesmere manuscripts in the Huntington Library, is a collection of poetry, mainly works by Hoccleve and Lydgate, which originated, in part, with the London scribe John Shirley in the mid-fifteenth century. After it left Shirley's hands, it made its way to Edward IV's court, where it was owned by Avery

⁶⁷ Both the *Brut* and *Guy* set Athelstan's rule against the backdrop of Danish invasion, but the *Brut* certainly does not mention that Athelstan was prophetically told where to find Guy, who fights a gigantic Danish warrior as Athelstan's champion.

Cornburgh, Yeoman of the Chamber to the King. It also bears the sixteenth-century inscriptions and drawings of Elizabeth and Nicholas Gainsford.⁶⁸

As with MS Eng. 530, these books highlight the need for good governance and moral virtue. The two longest works in the Ellesmere compilation are Hoccleve's *Regiment of Princes* and Lydgate's *Danse Macabre*, both of which seek to amend the reader in the face of an uncertain world.⁶⁹ Added to these are three shorter poems by Lydgate on the uncertainty of modern affairs: the *Reason of the Ram's Horn*, the *Sotell Reason of the Crab*, and the *Reason de Fallacia Mundi*. The first two of these poems are wonderfully satirical, professing the world to be perfectly logical and stable, as straight as a ram's horn or direct as "the crabbe goon forward." ⁷⁰ Both of these themes, along with the influence of printed works, can be found within the annotations of the *Brut*.

The Gainsford *Brut* was a work in progress from the beginning. The manuscript ends imperfectly before 1419, and the rubricated initials were never supplied. Throughout, the text has been amended and enriched by several generations of annotators. At the end of the Albina episode, a late fifteenth-century reader offers a Latin moral in the margin "satis peccauit qui non resistere potuit" (he sinned enough who was not able to resist).⁷¹ While applicable to Albina's treachery and lack of self-control, the choice of summary reflects a popular source of learning: it is the moral to Aesop's fable of the wolf and the sheep. In later sections of the *Brut*, the morals ascribed are more directly relatable to English governance.

⁶⁸ The first part of the manuscript ends with a rubricated note "Iste Liber Constat" and then a handwritten inscription by the book's early owners, Avery Cornburgh. For John Shirley, See A.I. Doyle, "More Light on John Shirley," *Medium Aevum* 30 (1967): 93-101; Partridge, "Legacy of John Shirley," 439-41.

⁶⁹ *The Danse* is a series of conversations between death and people of different estates, from the Pope and the Emperor on down to the laborer and the newborn child. Space prohibits a full discussion of John Lydgate's work, but see D. Pearsall, *John Lydgate* (London: Routledge, 1970) and M. Nolan, *John Lydgate and the Making of Public Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005). For the *Danse*, see J. Clark, *The Dance of Death in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance* (Glasgow: Jackson & Son, 1950).

⁷⁰ Huntington MS EL 26 A 13, fols. 13r-14v.

⁷¹ BL MS Royal 18 B III, fol. 6v.

Where the chronicle describes the actions of Isabella and Roger Mortimer, for example, a longer moral relates the dangers of unchecked vice to a commonwealth.⁷² The similar theme of these two annotations (self-governance), as well as their association with Isabella and Roger Mortimer, suggests that older patterns of reading in the *Brut* were still being followed, as readers traced the effects of excess and injustice up to their much more recent past.

One other feature suggests that this book was not read in isolation from other historical works. Next to the description of Lucius' conversion to Christianity, the same reader has imported two references to popes: Cletus and Anacletus. The material for these additions matches the text of the St. Albans edition of the *Chronicles*.⁷³ While no other interventions like this are present in the text, it is possible that the source of the corrections was a later printed edition of the *Chronicles*, and that the corrector saw fit to draw in additional information around a particularly significant historical event.

The bulk of the annotation in the Gainsfords' books, however, shows evidence not of scholarly reading, but of a long history of use and learning by an early modern gentry family. At the tops of pages, chapter headings and other passages have been copied in a shaky hand, which might be that of a young Nicholas Gainsford.⁷⁴ Once the manuscript moved from London to Surrey, it remained a source of information and exempla and took on the additional role of a workbook and a source of fundamental learning for the family members. Along with the birth of Erasmus Gainsford, the pages of the manuscript record medical recipes, the names of other readers, and doodles of faces. While these annotations would say little about how readers engaged with the text of Britain's history, they do convey

⁷² "Yt ys nocommon welthe where a theffe ys as muche extemyd as a true man' A brallar & a brecare of pease as a nonest man' & were as vartu ys not commended & vyses un ponnyshyd the comman welth shall sone com' to confusyon' Verum est" BL MS Royal 18 B III, fol. 167v.

⁷³ *idem*, fol. 20r.

⁷⁴ eg. fols. 126r-127v.

a better sense of the types of readers who came to the text. Doodles are ubiquitous throughout the *Brut* manuscripts, but it is clear that some readers also learned, in part, how to write by copying out passages from their history books and recording salutations for formal letters in the margins.

These books show in microcosm what the previous chapters have sought to demonstrate from the outset. Though their means of production differed, they both were a part of the expanding historical consciousness that formed around the history of England, ancient as well as contemporary. The printing of the *Chronicles of England* did not ossify the medieval chronicle tradition. Instead, it contributed greatly to what was an ongoing expansion and renewal not in the copying of manuscripts, but in the ways of thinking about the past. The English printers did not—could not—have seen the *Chronicles* as an economically opportune but intellectually vacuous text. Likewise, readers did not deem the Trojan origins of the Britons empty entertainment. Instead, the history of England formed a key component of their thought about Christianity, politics, and the validity of their past. By illustrating the connections between manuscripts and printed books, and between the history of England and the production of a wider variety of didactic, historical, and devotional literature, I do not mean to suggest the primacy of one genre or media over any other, but rather to stress their interdependence. Together, they reveal a process greater than the sum of any of their parts, a process in which the past is not only recalled, but reused and remade.

Conclusion: “All is Written for Our Doctrine”

In his prologue to the *Morte D'Arthur*, Caxton set out what might be a cautionary note to his readers. While Caxton professed that Arthur had, indeed been an historical figure in Britain, he advised that “[b]ut for to give faith and believe that all is true that is contained herein, ye be at your liberty. But all is written for our doctrine.”⁷⁵ Like the material in the book, this prologue treads the line between Caxton the salesman, Caxton the entertainer, and Caxton the historian. While the three categories were not entirely distinct, either to Caxton or to his contemporaries, there were clearly different types of learning that could be combined to produce “our doctrine.”

Since the publication of Lister Matheson’s “Printer and Scribe,” it has now become more common to consider Caxton as an editor, translator, and a literary figure in his own right. Yet the characterization of Caxton’s activities as “scribal,” correct as they may be, carries with it the accompanying risk that Caxton be considered “medieval” in his approach to texts. Joseph Levine, among others, uses this view to treat Caxton as the last product of a literary mind that was unable or unwilling to distinguish fact from fiction, anachronism from history, and forgery from legitimate documentary evidence.⁷⁶ However, it should be seen from the chapters above that Caxton, as well as his medieval readers and the compilers of Brut manuscripts, exploited and confronted, rather than ignored, these distinctions.

It is true that Caxton, more so than any of the printers who came after him, presented himself to his readers much in the way that a medieval scribe would have done for

⁷⁵ CP 109.

⁷⁶ Levine, *Humanism and History*, 37: “He printed romances as history and best fables as fiction without much worrying about the difference.” Joanna Bellis draws a more sympathetic, but still problematic, distinction between medieval chronicle history as “partisan, mimetic, and participatory,” which she contrasts to the “objective, compendious, and observationalist discourse of the antiquarians” (*Hundred Years’ War*, 56).

his patron, and he took a similar approach to manipulating the texts that he produced.

Caxton's approach to English history does demonstrate that he saw it as a distinct part of a larger program of reading and learning, geared towards entertainment, but also towards the production of moral, virtuous citizens of a country that was as much commonwealth as it was kingdom. In Matheson's formulation, Caxton was both printer and scribe, but he was also a reader and, to the extent that he could be, a critic. He embodied the features of scribal culture that would persist long into the age of print, and he also played a key role in expanding the field of historical literature into something that was growing increasingly more diverse and complex. Behind his self-fashioning as a "simple rude person" lay a clear idea of what sorts of things a citizen should know, which guided his program of printing as much as the desire to sell books. His skeletal defense of Arthur, as well, would provide a foundation for sixteenth century elaborations, not also on the subject of the legendary British king, but also on the judgment that Caxton was asking of his readers.

The readers and buyers of books in the first decades of print were undoubtedly faced with unprecedented choice in what they could read, and the use of their books demonstrates a similar versatility and variety in their reading. While the early history of England remained textually stable, the wide range of material around it gave the Britons more points to connect with the different facets of learning and entertainment that these diverse gentlemen and women encountered in their study, leisure, and lived experience. Whether they were looking for moral exempla, political precedent, or even the building blocks of literacy, the history of Brutus and his descendants became part of their doctrine and thus, a guiding influence on their further reading and thought.

Chapter Six

The Battle for Britain's Past

In our times a writer has come forth to excuse these faults in the Britons, manufacturing many silly fictions about them, and with his impudent vanity extolling them for their virtue far above the Macedonians and the Romans. This man is named Geoffrey, having the surname of Arthur because he writes much about Arthur taken from the fables of the ancient Britons and embroidered by himself, and passing it off as honest history by giving it the coloration of the Latin language.

Polydore Vergil, *Anglica Historia* (1534)

Truly, I applaud the fables which have crept into the history of Arthur no more than Polydore the censor. But to be... as a foolish forsaker of the truth, and so leave her parties undefended, that I shall never do.

John Leland, *Assertio inchyttissimi Athurii regis Britanniae* (1544)

The criticisms of Geoffrey of Monmouth's *History* leveled by Polydore Vergil are usually considered a bellwether for the fate of Britain's legendary origins, as well as for the writing of history in England more broadly. Polydore, it is said, dragged the tottering legacy of Arthur's most fantastic achievements to its logical and final conclusion, paving the way for English historians to do the same later in the century. Vergil used his position as Papal curate in England to portray himself as an outsider to Britain's history, and, thus, to bolster his claims of critical detachment. Yet for all its rhetorical flourish, the grounds for Polydore's condemnation of Geoffrey and his work were not new. The lament about Geoffrey's "cloaking fables in Latin" had been made by one of Geoffrey's contemporaries, William of Newburgh. Polydore's introduction mentioned William favorably, but it also relied upon a

more ancient source, the writings of the sixth-century chronicler Gildas, which Polydore had edited.

The demolition of Britain's ancient past was also far from complete. Even though Vergil's *Anglica Historia* removes much of the Arthurian material from its account of England's history and questions the veracity of Geoffrey's work in its entirety, the text nevertheless preserves the initial succession of British monarchs from Brutus onward.¹ Additionally, while Vergil is thought to have compiled the work in the early sixteenth century, the *Anglica Historia* did not appear in its first printed edition until nearly two decades later, in 1534. Vergil composed his preface in August of 1533, and thus his statement that popular opinion would not agree with much of his chronicle suggests that Vergil may have had a more specific reference point for his chronicles than the works of Geoffrey of Monmouth. In April of 1533, Parliament had enacted the Act in Restraint of Appeals, in which Henry VIII had argued that "by diverse and sundry old chronicles" his power was above that of the Pope. Henry's account of Britain's territorial sovereignty began with Brutus' division of Britain among his sons, in much the same way that Edward I's had when he appealed for Britain's overlordship of Scotland.²

The re-evaluation of England's past, in other words, needed to cautiously navigate the re-evaluation of Great Britain's present by Henry VIII. The first half of the 1530s witnessed a flurry of uses for the ancient history of Britain, many of which would have been familiar to historians of the 1300s, following Edward I's appeal to Britain's ancient past as

¹ M. McKisack, *Medieval History in the Tudor Age* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1971), 99-103.

² D. Armitage, *The Ideological Origins of the British Empire*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 28-60. Armitage describes the invocation of Geoffrey of Monmouth's history in the sixteenth century as engendering "the vernacular language of English imperial ideology" (36). The previous chapters have demonstrated that there is a good deal more continuity to the language and, indeed, to the invocations of this history in the Middle Ages.

part of his claim to overlordship of Scotland. These invocations of an “anti-Roman” Britain carried a profound spiritual element beyond its imperial claims, as well as territorial import. Unlike Edward I, Henry VIII was asserting himself as a religious authority in place of the Roman Church.

Amidst sustained scholarly criticism and momentous political developments, historians who study the sixteenth century are most comfortable situating the later uses of Britain’s Trojan origins as an outpouring of literature designed to bolster the legitimacy of the Tudor regime.³ The re-use of older chronicles, genealogies, and histories by members of Henry VIII’s court, as well as the commissioning of new ones, combined with increasing frequency and volume of publication in print, appeared to make the case that a monarchy could shape its own image using whatever tools were available to it.

Just as surveys of English historical writing used Geoffrey of Monmouth as a litmus test for a medieval writer’s historical acumen, early modernists also seem content to point out cases where the invocation of the ancient Britons was just as politically effective as it had been in the fourteenth century, that is to say, not very. When presented with the full extent of Henry’s historical claims in 1531, which included charters and documents issued by the British monarch, the French imperial ambassador Chapuys reported to Charles V that

I was sorry to see that [Arthur] was not also Emperor of Asia, *IMPERATOR ASIE*, as he might have left the present king Henry for his successor in such vast dominions...If by shewing me the inscription the Duke meant that the present king Henry might be such a conqueror as king Arthur, I could not help observing that the Assyrians, Persians, Macedonians, and Romans had also made great conquests, and everyone knew what had become of their empire.⁴

³ See K. Sharpe, *Selling the Tudor Monarchy: Authority and Image in Sixteenth-Century England*, (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009); S. Anglo, *Images of Tudor Kingship* (London: Seaby, 1992).

⁴ Cited in S. Anglo, “The *British History* and its Implications,” in *Images of Tudor Kingship*, 55-56.

Much in the same way that the many manuscript copies of the *Brut* were considered “popular” if not historically valuable, the invocations of the ancient Britons by the Tudors have been examined separately from the emerging, critical historical method that characterized the sixteenth century and the period that followed.

The Englishman seen most in line with this campaign is the first Englishman to bear the title of “antiquarius,” John Leland. In response to Vergil’s accusations, and ostensibly in the service of Henry VIII, Leland composed the first sustained defense of Arthur as an historical figure. The *Assertio inchyttissimi Arthurii regis Britanniae* was printed in 1544, and it promised to rescue the true history of Britain’s most famous king not only from its many detractors, but also from the fables that had crept into the narrative.⁵ The *Assertio* positioned itself as a work of rhetoric as well as scholarship, seeking to persuade its readers that an historical Arthur had, indeed, existed.

In order to accomplish his aim, Leland mustered a mix of invective, chronicle, and archaeological evidence. While the opening and closing sections of the argument seek to illustrate the failings of Geoffrey’s critics, the intervening chapters look to enumerate what could be known about the events of Arthur’s life, and in particular his activities within Britain. Leland’s account provides traces of Arthur’s relics—his crown, tomb, and seal—as well as a chain of medieval authors and monarchs who had made mention of the king. Leland’s harshest language is reserved not for Polydore or Gildas, but rather for William of Newburgh, whose invective against Geoffrey had led Polydore to abandon his otherwise critical and erudite nature and attempt to redeem the Romans.

⁵ STC 15540, fol. 34v. hereafter referred to as *Assertio*.

The *Assertio* was only one part of Leland's investigation into Britain's ancient past. He proposed to undertake a systematic survey of all of the libraries in England and to draw out a true picture of the island's past from its most ancient sources, many of which he also undertook to edit. Although no documentation survives, it appears that Henry VIII had given his approval to the project, both in the form of a stipend paid to Leland and a "diploma" that Leland carried with him on his travels.⁶ While the ready availability of printed books made the incongruities in Britain's history more apparent to learned readers, Henry's dissolution of the monasteries and their libraries brought new productions back into conversation with "ancient" authorities.

Unfortunately, Leland is remembered today for falling far short of these goals. The *Assertio* would stand as the only prose work composed by Leland and printed during his lifetime, but between 1543-45, the printer of the *Assertio*, Reynerus Wolfe, also produced a number of Leland's shorter poetic works. These poems were constructed in praise of Henry VIII and his family and are rich in topographical information. The *Genethliacon*, written after the birth of Edward VI, contained a lengthy appendix on the pronunciation and etymology of the British language, the *syllabus et interpretatio antiquarum dictionum*. The *Cygynea cantio* (1545), imagined a swan's journey down the Thames to London, and was accompanied by an index matching the ancient place names passed along the way with their modern equivalents. Thus, the political and encomiastic poetry of Leland also contained the building blocks for topographical and linguistic inquiry into Britain's past.⁷ The *Assertio* also contained an

⁶ Levine, *Humanism and History: Origins of Modern Historiography* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1987), 73-108.

⁷ McKisack notes the presence of these poems in Bale's *Catalogus*, but discounts them as antiquarian works (*Tudor Age*, 7-8).

encomium to Henry VIII, the *Arturius redivivus*, and when bought, it was often bought and bound with one or more of these tracts.

In 1547, Leland appears to have fallen ill. John Bale, his contemporary and friend, printed an annotated edition of Leland's speech (more Bale's commentary than Leland's work) in 1549, mentioning that Leland's illness had impeded the continuance of his further work.⁸ Bale also suggested that Leland had prepared editions of historical works that he had already found for printing in Europe, but if these were ever printed, none have survived.⁹ Bale's praise of Leland in this volume was fulsome, yet guarded. In the prologue to the *Laboryouse Journey*, Bale praised Leland's diligence and zeal, as well as his mastery of languages, but acknowledged that Leland's promises may have exceeded even these capabilities: "I much do fear it that he was vainglorious, and that he had a poetical wit, which I lament, for I judge it one of the chieftest things that caused him to fall besides his right discernings."¹⁰

The combination of Leland's madness, vainglory, and the pecuniary nature of his printed works have made it perhaps more easy than it should be to paint Leland's activities as opportunistic flattery. Leland's modern critics have been happy to adopt Bale's judgment, "he was vainglorious," as a scholarly epitaph of sorts. However, the evidence suggests that Leland the encomiast was never far from Leland the antiquarian. In the model of continental

⁸ J. Bale, *The Laboryouse Journey and Searche of John Lelande for England's Antiquities....* (London: S. Mierdman, 1549), sig. D6v.

⁹ Bale, *Laboryouse Journey*, sig. C4r-v. "Of the bokes which shoulde be in the handes of Hieronymus Frobenius, can I nothyng heare...Whiche maketh me to thinke, that eyther they have peryshed by the waye, or else that they are thrown a syde in some corner, and so forgotten."

¹⁰ idem, sig. B4r. Bale had made a similar judgment in his encyclopedic edition of England's writers which had appeared the year before, and which his expanded *Catalogus* would also reflect. *Illustrium majoris Britanniae scriptorum, hoc est, Angliae, Cambriae, ac Scotiae Summarium* (Ipswich, John Overton: 1548), fols. 240 r-v.

scholars, Leland saw himself as performing a service of paramount importance to the nation and to its ruling dynasty.

The controversy between these two authors is often referenced as a turning point in the development of English historiography, the front lines of a battle between new critical methods and the weight of tradition.¹¹ For Denis Hay, the first editor of the *Anglica Historia*, the historical climate of the mid-sixteenth century is best summarized as a conflict between the “Age of Faith” and the anticipations of the “Age of Reason” that heralded true modernity.¹² Leland and his adherents were on the wrong side of historiography: their reliance upon medieval chroniclers seen as a weakness or logical failing, and their “discoveries” of Britain’s ancient relics innocuous at best.¹³

Since then, a series of studies of this debate have focused on its role in the development of English scholarly culture, usually referred to as “English Humanism.”¹⁴ The particular approach of its authors to the authority of ancient texts certainly merits comparison to the traditional definition of humanistic activity and to parallels with actors on the Continent.¹⁵ In the eyes of Joseph Levine and others, this *ad fontes* approach was responsible for fostering a sense of anachronism which fundamentally transformed the practice of historical writing.¹⁶ The inconsistencies that their investigations revealed—both

¹¹ Kendrick, *British Antiquity*, 4-11 and 78-98; McKisack, *Tudor Age*, 1-25, 5; Levine, *Humanism and History*, 43-49.

¹² D. Hay, *Polydore Vergil: Renaissance Historian and Man of Letters*, (Oxford: 1952), 113

¹³ Kendrick surveys the archaeological evidence presented by Leland, in particular, and remarks (tongue firmly in cheek) “After this, let anyone try to deny that Arthur had existed and had been a great hero!” (*British Antiquity*, 98).

¹⁴ For a discussion of this term and its limitations, see above, Chapter 4, pp. 161-64.

¹⁵ See A. Grafton, *Commerce with the Classics: Ancient Books and Renaissance Readers* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1997), 92-134.

¹⁶ J. Levine, *Humanism and History*, 11. “Fifteenth-century writers were usually unwilling and largely unable to make a clear distinction between fact and fiction, either in theory or in practice (though they sometimes attempted it) and that their various methods of reconstructing the past produced a history very different from our own.” Antonia Gransden, however, posits the development of antiquarian activity as an outgrowth

within texts and between authors—created tensions in the writing of history that Tudor historians were ill-equipped to deal with.

At face value, the writings of sixteenth-century which deal with medieval history reinforce these two distinctions. Bale used the *Laboryouse Journey* not only to commemorate a friend, but also (as was his wont) to lament the feeble state of England's efforts to find truth in its early history: "We have the fable of Dioclecyane & his xxxiii Daughters, and how this realm was called *Albion ab albis rupibus*, with lie and all, but the truth as yet we have not, how this land was first inhabited."¹⁷ Bale laid the blame for these developments, in part, at the feet of Caxton: his judgment of the printer as "a man not entirely stupid or ignorant" is oft-cited as emblematic of his view towards the medieval practice of history, along with his criticisms of earlier British writers for their lack of attention to detail, particularly concerning chronology.¹⁸

Yet amidst his criticism, Bale reveals an important consideration: "the truth *as yet*, we have not." As the previous chapters demonstrate, it would be overly simplistic to limit the implications of these historical discussions to teleologically justified cynicism, on the one hand, and "vainglory" or opportunism, on the other. The controversy over Britain's ancient past was not confined to a handful of antiquarians scratching away at the records of early medieval authors. It encompassed the entire discussion and debate over the Britons that had taken place in the intervening centuries. More so than at any previous time, enough material existed to enable a critical historiographical discussion of the island's heritage. Leland's work, published and unpublished, provided a model for successive investigations of Britain's

of monastic method. See *idem*, *Legends, Traditions, and History in Medieval England* (London: Hambledon Press, 1993), 299-327.

¹⁷ Bale, *Laboryouse Journey*, sig. B3r.

¹⁸ Bale, *Summarium*, fols. 84v-85r, 208r-v; His judgment of Caxton is cited, e.g. in K. Tonry, "Reading History in Caxton's *Polychronicon*," *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 111 (2011): 168-98.

history on the local and national level. The use of Leland's works, as with the uses of the ancient history of Britain, proved more vibrant than the "formidable deadweight of antiquarian opinion" proposed by Kendrick.¹⁹ Its versatility extended beyond debates between history and antiquarianism. Along with the wave of manuscript and printed texts produced over the preceding half century, new investigations into Britain's past and present situated themselves in the larger evolution of England's historical imagination.

The sixteenth century distinguishes itself among those who study it as the period when historical method, as well as the ways in which history was encountered, underwent significant transformations. Intellectually, intensifying interests in chronology, linguistics, and diplomatic produced a narrower definition of the *ars historica* as an intellectual pursuit and as a literary form, while an ever growing number of parallel genres made use of historical information.²⁰ The combined activities of England's printers, discussed in the previous chapter, certainly played a part in the shifting landscape of historical reading. But, as has been demonstrated, the re-making of histories in the early sixteenth century did not come as a complete break from prior traditions. Rather, the printers and their books played a role in compiling previously disparate historical works and traditions and presenting them to a reading audience. What that audience did with their books, however, was much more varied.

The following sections of the chapter are focused around three annotated copies of Leland's printed works. Through the study of their annotations, we may begin to get a sense

¹⁹ Kendrick, *British Antiquity*, 18.

²⁰ See especially A. Grafton, *What Was History? The Art of History in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007); D. Woolf, *The Social Circulation of the Past: English Historical Culture 1500-1730* (Oxford: OUP, 2003) 8-14 and "From Hystories to the Historical: Five Transitions in Thinking About the Past, 1500-1700," in *The Uses of History in Early Modern England*, ed. P. Kewes (San Marino, CA: Huntington Library Press, 2006), 31-67. For later developments in England, see J. Salmon, "Precept, Example, and Truth: Diggory Wheare and the *ars historica*," in *The Historical Imagination in Early Modern Britain: History, Rhetoric, and Fiction 1500-1800*, ed. D. Kelley and D. Sacks (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 11-36.

of how their owners approached, reconciled, and adapted the information in Leland's works as part of their larger, and quite divergent, personal and intellectual aims. The owners, authors, and interlocutors noted on the pages of these books were all united by a political as well as a literary context. They all may be placed within the orbit of two key promoters of antiquarian study: Mathew Parker and William Cecil.²¹ However, not all the uses they found for Leland's work were polemical or political. During the reign of Elizabeth I, the exploration and exploitation of the island's past took on many forms. Some were extremely traditional—manuscript pedigrees, civic processions and rituals—while others, notably the attempts to vindicate or reconcile Britain's early history with Roman or European authors, were relatively novel. The patterns of reading and writing found in each of these books clearly illuminate the ways in which political, social, and personal uses of the past were juxtaposed, combined, and commemorated on their pages.

I. Looking for Ine: William Lambarde's Travels

The first such copy of Leland's work is London, British Library BL C 95 c.15, owned by the Kentish antiquary and legal scholar William Lambarde. The volume contains three of Leland's works—the *Genethliacon*, *Cygneia cantio*, and *Assertio*—in a limp vellum binding titled “Lelandus Chron,” in Lambarde's hand. His inscription and the date appear on the title page on the first three texts, and although the *Assertio* does not bear his signature and the date, a

²¹ For Cecil, see M. Graves, *Burghley: William Cecil, Lord Burghley* (London: Longman, 1988). In addition to being a patron of many of the writers in this chapter, Burghley also encouraged printers, allowing John Day to print on his estate during the reign of Mary. See E. Evenden and T. Freeman, *Religion and the Book in Early Modern England: The Making of Foxe's Book of Martyrs* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 55 and 60-68. For Parker's activities, see McKisack, *Tudor Age*, 26-49; R. Page, *Matthew Parker and His Books* (Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute Publications, 1993); and, A. Grafton, “Matthew Parker: The Book as Archive.” *History of Humanities* 2 (2017): 17-50. With regard to the *Brut*, E. Bryan, “Matthew Parker and the Middle English Prose *Brut*,” in *The Prose Brut and Other Late Medieval Chronicles: Books Have Their Histories*, ed. J. Rajsic, E. Kooper, and D. Hoche (Woodbridge: York Medieval Press, 2016), 165-81.

series of sequentially numbered pages in Lambarde's hand link the entire book together. Lambarde acquired the volume, or at least the first three titles, in 1564, while a member of Lincoln's Inn, and perhaps while assembling material for a topographical dictionary of England.²² This work would later morph into what is now considered the first county history of England to appear: the *Perambulation of Kent* (1568).

Given Lambarde's interest in topography, it is perhaps not surprising that the bulk of his annotations have to do with the place names contained in Leland's work. The *Cygnea Cantio*, in particular, is marked on practically every page with the translations and, in a few places, corrections to Leland's references. Cross references also exist between each of the texts in the book, e.g., between mentions of places in the *Assertio* and the *Cygnea Cantio*. Following through the texts, it appears that Lambarde found the appendices more useful than Leland's poetic works.

The vast majority of Lambarde's marginalia might be classified as "narrative," in that they follow or clarify the text.²³ Translations, cross-references, and the underlining of some few passages demonstrate that Lambarde engaged with the book as a cohesive whole and that he checked and augmented some of its information with material from Anglo-Saxon chronicles. However, as frequently as they appear, there is little in Lambarde's narrative commentary that betrays a critical engagement with the works. The translations of place names in the *Cygnea cantio*, for example, have the same emphasis as the comment next to a Latin verse on Corineus' wrestling match with Gogmagog that notes giant bones can still be

²² "William Lambarde (1536–1601)," *ODNB* doi:10.1093/ref:odnb/15921. Last Accessed 3/26/2017.

²³ No established categories exist for the types of marks that readers left in their books. William Sherman, on the other hand, prefers to refer to types of reading as "adversaria," "scholia," and "glosses," and advocates paying closer attention to the non-verbal annotations in books. See W. Sherman, *Used Books: Marking Readers in Renaissance England* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), 16-23.

found in England.²⁴ Lambarde marked the section, writing “ossa gigantea” in the margin, but by itself the annotation does not demonstrate whether this passage was met with credulity, interest, amusement, or derision.

Topography appears to be the overriding reason that Lambarde bothered to read any of Leland’s works at all, including the *Assertio*. While we get little sense of whether Lambarde was (or could be) convinced by Leland’s case for Arthur, there are two other categories of marginal annotation within the work, which link Lambarde’s interest to topography to his other scholarly pursuits and suggest a use for Leland’s works that went beyond a source of information. In a few instances, the annotations build on or expand the content of Leland’s works. Several guesses for the names of places can be noted in the work, sometimes predicated by language that marks them as questions, such as “ni fallor” (If I am not wrong). Through these small conversations with himself, Lambarde brings information into the book, using it as a collection point for material from other histories.

One such inscription incorporates Lambarde’s other main scholarly interest: the laws and history of Anglo-Saxon England. A note next to the etymology of Glastonbury underscores the name Iniswyrting, with the marginal comment “Ex Ine, ni fallor.”²⁵ While at Lincoln’s Inn, Lambarde came under the tutelage of Lawrence Nowell. Under Nowell’s guidance, Lambarde learned Old English and began to investigate and compile the works of Anglo-Saxon law and literature.²⁶ In collaboration with the printer John Day, he produced the first works ever to incorporate Old English characters. The first of these was an edition of the Laws and works of Alfred the Great, which included interlineated translations and was

²⁴ BL C 95 c 15, *Cygynea Cantio*, sig. 29r.

²⁵ BL C 95 c 15, *Assertio*, sig. 21r.

²⁶ R. Brackman, *The Elizabethan Invention of Anglo-Saxon England: Lawrence Nowell, William Lambarde, and the Study of Old English* (Cambridge: DS Brewer, 2012).

likely also intended as a primer for learning Old English. In addition to Alfred the Great, both Nowell and Lambarde shared a fascination with a much earlier and obscure ruler of Wessex: king Ine.

Ine is mentioned by Bede and the *Anglo Saxon Chronicle* as the ruler of Wessex from 688 until his abdication in 726. In addition to his antiquity, several important aspects of Ine's made him particularly interesting to Nowell and Lambarde, and to the re-use of Britain's early history more generally. According to Alfred the Great, Ine had been the first monarch outside Kent to issue his own legal code. Alfred had preserved some of these laws, and several copies of Ine's law codes survived into the sixteenth century. Nowell, perhaps with Lambarde's help, compiled these into an elaborate presentation copy around 1565.²⁷ This collection is notable not only as one of the first "critical editions"

In addition to his role as a lawgiver, Ine was also the successor of Cadwallader, and the crux of the passage of dominion between British and Anglo-Saxon history, a connection which both the *Polychronicon* and the Latin *Bruts* had sought to reconcile with the narrative of Cadwallader in Geoffrey's *Historia*. These two facets of Ine's reign appear to have driven not only Lambarde's reading about Ine in Leland's *Assertio*, but also the construction of another historical compilation connected to Lambarde and Nowell. Huntington Library MS HM 26341 is a collection of excerpts in Nowell's hand, dated 1565. The first fifty eight folios of the work provide a digest of the history of Britain from its inception to the reign of Stephen, loosely modeled on Henry of Huntington's *Historia Anglorum*, and subsequent entries detail the laws established by Edward the Confessor and later confirmed by William the Conqueror.

²⁷ Johns Hopkins, MSE Special Collections BF 277. For the spurious laws attributed to Ine, see A. Freeman, *Bibliotheca Fictiva: A Collection of Books and Manuscripts Relating to Literary Forgery: 400BC - 2000AD* (London: Bernard Quaritch, 2014), 152.

Although this version of the *Historia* is described by the catalogue and the editor as “extremely defective,” it serves a purpose as a more focused inquiry.²⁸ The first three folios detail the praise of the island of Britain, the major cities and archbishoprics, and the “five Plagues” that had invaded the island. The history of the Trojan Britons is pointedly omitted; the heading “origo Brytonum” contains only the single sentence “the origin of the Britons is not contained in Bede (but) is found in other authorities.”²⁹ The narrative begins instead at the arrival of the Saxons during the time of Vortigern.

The same number of folia, by comparison, are devoted to the transition of power between Cedwalla (Cadwallader) and Ine, as well as the events of Ine’s reign. Cedwalla’s most important contributions here, as in the Latin *Brut*, are his death and the miraculous visions attributed to him.³⁰ Rather than the two couplet epitaph found in the Latin *Bruts*, however, MS HM 26341 preserves a longer series of verses detailing Cadwallader’s voyage to Rome and conversion, which Henry of Huntington had imported from Bede’s *Historia Ecclesiastica*. As the account goes into much more detail on events during Ine’s reign, it holds both Cadwallader and Ine up as examples of proper piety and just rule, linking the dynasty of Wessex to the history that had come before it.

Lambarde likely received this book following Nowell’s departure for Europe in 1568, but the similarities of topic and the time it was compiled link it to the information that Lambarde imported into his copy of Leland. Throughout MS 26341, a similar pattern of narrative annotation, focusing on the names of places, can be found. Both men appear to

²⁸ C. Dutschke, *Guide to Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts in the Huntington Library*, 2 vols. (San Marino, CA: Huntington Library, 1989), vol. II, 657-58.

²⁹ “*origo britonum in Beda non invenitur in aliis autem authoribus haberetur*” MS HM 26341, fol. 1v.

³⁰ In the Middle English *Brut*, Cadwallader is noted for his decision to take the Britons from the Island, effectively ending British rule until a suitable replacement should return. (Brie, *The Brut*,) The Latin *Bruts* omit this prophecy, suggesting that Cadwallader’s relinquishing of power to the Saxons had become the critical event of his reign.

have been looking for the laws and rulers of their antiquity in a similar manner, with the end result that they were drawn back into the ancient history of the island, as well as outward, to its physical manifestations.

Other inscriptions suggest that Lambarde was incorporating material from his own travels or recollections into the margins. Within the *Cygneae cantio*, Lambarde uses the entry for Bath to record an inscription he saw there in 1564.³¹ At the parallel point within the text, Leland discusses how Bath was famous for Roman inscriptions, a detail which may have also prompted Lambarde to include his note. The Latin inscription Lambarde recorded, however, was not Roman, but Anglo-Saxon in appearance. Lambarde used his copy of the *Opera* not just as a repository of topographical information, but as a record commemorating his own travels and discoveries. The drive to understand the past also led Lambarde, as it did many of his scholarly contemporaries, to master the original languages of his sources: in this case not the eloquent classical Latin of the Italian humanists, but the Old English of the Saxons.³²

Leland's itineraries, both real and imaginary, formed part of the inspiration for Lambarde's own antiquarian investigations, and from the marks in his copy of Leland's works it appears that Lambarde sought not only inspiration and information from his predecessor, but also a traveling companion. The comments on Ine and the Anglo-Saxon kings also speak to a particular moment in Lambarde's scholarly collaboration, during which he and his mentor were actively following the trail of Wessex's earliest monarch, with the full encouragement of Elizabeth's foremost advisers and antiquarians.

³¹ BL C 95 c 15, fol. 25v.

³² Levine, *Humanism and History*, 92.

II. Genealogy and Custom: John Dee and the Trojan Origins of Britain

While Lambarde had examined Britain's antiquity along legal and topographical lines, a different approach to the past can be seen in the reading and writing of John Dee. An advisor to Elizabeth, Dee was also a mathematician, genealogist, and mystic. He fueled his scholarly pursuits with a voracious appetite for books. In the fifty years following his matriculation at Cambridge in 1542, Dee corresponded with the foremost scholars of his age, travelled widely in Europe, and amassed what may have been the largest library in Elizabethan England at his London home of Mortlake. Dee's library contained between three and four thousand books when it was catalogued in 1583, and beyond its contents, its attraction to scholarly visitors made it, in the words of William Sherman, "one of the great monuments of English Renaissance culture."³³

Even though Dee's library was ransacked during his lifetime, over a hundred books still survive which can be traced back to it, thanks in large part to the copious marginal annotations and inscriptions that Dee left in his books, as well as the two catalogues of the library in Dee's own hand. Both the library and its component parts reveal a strategy of reading that was both broader and differently oriented than Lambarde's. Both readers were concerned with authorities, their narrative annotations often copying out the names of ancient and contemporary authors in the margins of their books. Dee's attention to these authors was altogether of a different level, since he was not only the owner of the library, he was likely also its primary catalogue and finding system.

Of all his contributions to English learning and literature, Dee is most remembered for his mathematical and mystical expositions. However, as his surviving books reveal, Dee

³³ Sherman, *John Dee*, 30.

was also an avid historian, geographer, and genealogist. In the 1570s, he undertook a short “perambulation” of his own around Cheshire, following in the mold of Leland, Bale, and Lambarde. He also traced his own family genealogy back to its ancient Welsh roots, and remained a strong proponent of Britain’s ancient history. The destruction of his library provided the impetus for Dee’s autobiographical petition to Elizabeth for redress, *The Compendious Rehearsall of John Dee*, which, Sherman notes, illustrates not only the number of works for which Dee received royal patronage, but also their variety of subjects.³⁴

Dee’s historical investigations found many political uses during the 1570s and 1580s. His reading formed the basis for two works that sought to define the British “commonwealth” (a term that had been developing for over a century in manuscript and print) and, more importantly, the “British Empire.”³⁵ As was the case with Lambarde, Dee’s emulation of the earlier Tudor historians began with the copies of their books. Dee’s copy of Leland’s works, now in the library of Corpus Christi College, Oxford, provides a window into a larger network of historical investigation and historical books.³⁶ His interest in genealogy, in particular, led him to compare and contrast the customs and ancestries of Brutus with the other Trojan lineages of Europe, and in his search he had not only the most recent printed books at his disposal, but also manuscript copies of some of the sources themselves, now “ancient” in their own right.

Dee’s copy of Leland, along with a printed version of Geoffrey of Monmouth’s *Historia*, represent the two most densely annotated texts. Even more examples of detailed marginalia can be found in two other histories: the two “eyewitness” accounts of the Trojan

³⁴ Sherman, *John Dee*, 7-8.

³⁵ Sherman, *John Dee*, 148-52.

³⁶ Christ’s Church College, Oxford Wb.5.13. This book contains the *Gentliacon*, *Assertio*, and *Cygnea Cantio*, and is not consistently foliated. References to this copy will include the call number as well as the folio or signature number of each text being cited.

War ascribed to Dares Phrygius and Dictys of Crete, and Thomas Walsingham's *Ypodigma Neustriae*, which contains a genealogy of the Normans.³⁷ While I was not able to examine all of Dee's historical works, this subset represents a significant portion of his surviving annotated history books, as well as all of the particularly annotated copies involving the Britons. Dee consulted print and manuscript exempla, primarily, though not exclusively in Latin.

Dee's annotations are, in general, more copious and more adversarial than Lambarde's. References to additional works and indices can be found in his copies, along with symbols and comments on the material he was reading. As might be expected from someone with so vast a library, Dee consulted most of these titles for specific information, and sometimes he only annotated an individual copy sparsely. Only the first 10 folios of the manuscript of the *Historia regum Britanniae*, for example, contain any of Dee's annotations, and two copies of Gildas' *De Excidio et conquestu britannie* bear little annotation at all.³⁸ Taken individually, then, these books would not offer any ground-breaking insights into Dee's reading of their texts, or even provide evidence of when they were read. Looking across the copies, patterns of interest are clearly visible that reveal the many possible approaches Dee took to reading his books.

Dee's copy of Leland contains some similarities to the copy annotated by Lambarde. Most of the annotations are narrative and brief, and, as with Lambarde's copy, the commentaries and addenda attached to Leland's poetic works receive more critical attention than the poems themselves, particularly those attached to the *Cygneae cantio*. Dee also copies out etymologies, but in general he is more interested in authors and authorities. In addition

³⁷ Now London, Royal College of Physicians D139/7 and D1/17-c-11, respectively.

³⁸ At this time, I have not been able to examine these copies, or the copy of Lemaire de Belges, in person. I am grateful to Jaap Geraerts for sharing his preliminary notes on these items with me.

to copying out references to books he has read, Dee also appears to be on the lookout for new books to add to his library, or to enquire about. For example, he notes the features of a compilation of illustrious men, perhaps compiled by Leland and never printed, as well as an antiquarian work by an unknown author, which Leland praises as diligently compiled.³⁹ These references might be passed to booksellers, or matched with other notes that Dee left in his histories, concerning valuable or notable collections he himself had visited.⁴⁰ As Sherman notes, the contents of Dee's library were continuously in a state of flux, and the books themselves remind us that Dee was constantly pushing beyond the boundaries of his own knowledge and expanding his book collection, both for his own benefit and the benefit of his associates.

Throughout the volume, Dee is interested in following Leland's premise in the *Assertio* that he was sorting out history from fable. In the *Laudacio pacis*, for example, the entry on "Trinovantum" contains the comment, "Brytannia historia multis scatere erroribus."⁴¹ Dee appears to be using this volume to glean information on the etymology of Britain and to trace the ancestry of the island's most ancient and notable inhabitants. Within the *Assertio*, a genealogical tree diagrams Arthur's descent, a component of several of the other books in this subset. Beyond the information about Arthur, however, the majority of Dee's annotations concern the use or accuracy of the authorities Leland cites within the work. Dee appears to have followed the author's polemic against the Scottish historian Hector Boethius, underlining references to the work, and also choice comments on its

³⁹ Oxford, Christ's Church Wb.5.13, *Cygynea Cantio* sig. F4r.

⁴⁰ Sherman, *John Dee*, 48.

⁴¹ Wb.5.13, *Laudacio Pacis*, sig. g3 r.

accuracy.⁴² Despite what the use of the *Assertio* might suggest, however, the ancient British figure that Dee is most interested in is not Arthur, but Brutus.

An additional series of annotations constitute a running commentary between Dee and his books, with the reader inserting himself into the margins. Rather than rote copies of information, or the organization of material, these annotations show flashes of personality: skepticism at the errors in British antiquities, but also the joy of discovery or confirmation, as when Dee encounters a particularly agreeable explanation for the pronunciation of Cornwall (his marginal note exclaims “recte! ei ago prius”).⁴³ In a similar manner to Lambarde’s “ni fallor” comments, these sorts of conversations emerge in the annotations of cultivated readers of the Elizabethan period: individuals who saw their annotations as a way to demonstrate their judgment and acumen, both to the authors who their annotations shared space with and to the other readers of their books.

A note on the flyleaf of the volume refers the reader to the entry in the *Cygneia cantio*’s commentary, which contains a consistent group of annotations on the antiquity of the island.⁴⁴ In his commentaries, Leland uses the explanation of names as a way to draw the reader through the writings of ancient and recent authorities, covering changes in opinion but also the history of language itself, which according to Leland had similarities with Hebrew.⁴⁵ Within this mini-essay on Britain’s history, Brutus looms large not only as the figure responsible for the naming and division of the island, but also for linking its heritage to the glorious traditions of Greece and Rome.

⁴² Wb.5.13, *Assertio*, fol. 16v

⁴³ Wb.5.13, *Gentbliacon*, sig. f1r.

⁴⁴ Wb.5.13, fol. i v.

⁴⁵ Wb 5.13, *Cygneia Cantio*, sig. D1r.

References to the Trojans, and the antiquity of British custom and language, draw the annotations in Dee's copy of Leland into conversation with the other historical works in this cluster, most specifically his printed copy of Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae*. It was here that additional information from Leland could be collected. Additional quotations and passages from the authorities Dee underscored in Leland's works can be found on the flyleaves, providing further historical context for the Britons, but also for Geoffrey of Monmouth as an author. The title page contains Dee's signature and two other inscriptions relevant to his stance on history. The first, at the foot of the page, is a quotation adapted from Cicero's *Orator*, "to not know what happened before your birth is to always be as a child, (*nescire, quid antequam natus sis, everit, est semper esset puerum*)."⁴⁶ More germane to the value of Geoffrey's history, however, is a statement that Ponticus Virunnius defended the history against Polydore Vergil, and that Bale had done the same against William of Newburgh and Polydore.⁴⁷

So if Dee was coming to this book from the perspective of Leland and his fellow contemporaries, what was he looking to take from the original edition, and what information was he bringing in? First and foremost, his copy suggests that Dee was looking for as much detail on the Trojans as he could find. The first several folios are heavily annotated with pedigrees, providing family trees of Aeneas and his descendants, with corresponding citations to the *Aeneid*. Dee's interest extends to the relationships between the other protagonists in the Brutus episode: he explores the connections between Helen and Pandrasus, the king of Greece, and also the connections between places in Italy and the

⁴⁶ Christ Church, Oxford Wb 5.12, sig AA1r. Modern editions have *acciderit* for *everit*.

⁴⁷ *ibid.* "Ponticus Virunnius, Italus eruditus / hanc defendit historiam / Baleius in Novoburgensem in Polydorum taxat / quia hunc in merite reprehendat."

locations where the Trojans and the Greeks fought. He ultimately derives the name of Locrine, Brutus' eldest son, from one such location.

Much of the annotation on these initial folios shows that Dee was comparing the names of places and people with other copies of the *Historia*, as well as other texts. Notes next to the names of Pandrasus and Imogen refer to variant spellings in other copies. Indeed, the annotations in one of Dee's manuscript copies of Geoffrey of Monmouth appear to corroborate this. Trinity College, Cambridge MS O.2.21, a fourteenth-century copy of the *Historia* owned by Dee, has later annotations only on its first ten folia, from the beginning of the narrative to the time that the Britons arrive on Albion.⁴⁸ These annotations are nowhere near as detailed as Dee's notes in the printed version, but the material is consistent with the corrections that he was making in the other edition. For example, in the printed copy he notes next to the name Imogen, "some copies have Innogen"—the spelling in O.2.21.⁴⁹ A note on the following folio of MS O.2.21, concerning the name of the island that Brutus receives Diana's prophecies (Lergetica in the manuscript), also corresponds to a lengthy digression in the printed edition on the possible transition of that island's name.⁵⁰

A later note on the spelling of Cornwall ties in with Dee's readings in the *Cygneia Cantio*. Dee's note in his printed edition of the *Historia* explains how the spelling of Corinea mutates to Cornubia without the need—as MS O.2.21 explains—for the spelling to be a compression of "cornu britanniae." Dee asserts that the name of the people who inhabited Cornwall was originally "Corinnienses," which mutated to "Corninienses" and then "Cornubienses" because of a confusion of v and b. Dee's reasoning combines two of his

⁴⁸ TCC MS O.2.21, fols. 5r-15r. A digital facsimile of this manuscript was consulted via the James Catalogue. <http://trin-sites-pub.trin.cam.ac.uk/james/viewpage.php?index=642>.

⁴⁹ Christ Church Oxford Wb 5.12, fol. 5v; TCC MS O.2.21, fol. 11v.

⁵⁰ TCC MS O.2.21, fol. 12r; Christ Church, Oxford, Wb.5.12, fol. 6r.

digressions in Leland's work — on the spellings of Welsh, old English, and Greek names, and his excited exclamation (recte!) when he came across Leland's alternate etymology. Thus, the notes in these two printed books, and the reading of a third manuscript, are linked together in Dee's reading practice.

The most thorough verification in Dee's copy, however, is reserved for the island of Leogrecia, where Brutus encounters Diana. In an effort to untangle the variant spellings of the island, Dee combines etymology with cartography. A preliminary note in the printed *Historia* notes several variants for the name, before a longer note posits a completely different reading. Dee notes that Brutus reaches the island after a day and a half's travel and suggests that its name is Tragecia. The mutation of this name, he explains in a note that fills both the top and bottom margins, is a two step process, beginning with its mis-hearing (Targecia) and then the confusion of theta and lambda in Greek manuscripts.⁵¹ Similar interventions take place for Totenes and Tyrhennia, with Dee bringing in Ptolemy to trace the 'Trojans' path through Spain down to the latitude and longitude where he is able.⁵²

These marginalia represent a sincere attempt on Dee's part to decode and verify the travels of Brutus to Britain, using a combination of his interests in genealogy, etymology, and the science of navigation. A clearer picture of Dee's activities also emerges by observing his readings across his manuscripts and printed books. Taken separately, each of the annotations in Dee's copies of Leland, Geoffrey, and his manuscript of the *Historia*, would indicate a general interest in the text of the book Dee was reading. When put in conversation, they reveal a process of reading as well as one of thought.

⁵¹ Christ Church, Oxford, Wb.5.12, fol. 6r.

⁵² Christ Church, Oxford, Wb.5.12, fol. 7r.

In addition to language and geography, Dee also attempts to trace the succession of British monarchs chronologically. In part, this meant using the internal events that were datable, as the readers of the *Brut* and the printers of the *Chronicles of England* had done before him. The lengthy line of monarchs that reigned between Brenne and Belin's conquest of Rome (dated by Dee to 276 BCE) up to the conquest of Britain by Julius Caesar is diagrammed out across an entire opening of the book.⁵³ Dee computes the time that elapsed between these events in terms of the age of the world, their relation to the birth of Christ, and just to be thorough, the Olympiads. From this point onward, chronological references become more frequent in Dee's annotation, building to the passage of dominion between the Britons and the Saxons. On the flyleaves of the book, Dee brings in material from the late-twelfth-century chronicler Ralph of Diceto as he attempts to sort out the reigns and deaths of different British figures named or confused with Cadwallader, digging through several centuries of varying opinions in the process.⁵⁴

Dee's thoroughness in chronology and geography demonstrates, on the one hand, how much of a muddle the varying opinions of Britain's antiquity had become by the sixteenth century. The different Cadwalladers that appear on the flyleaves of the *Historia* reflect not only the inventions of Geoffrey and Bede, but also the additions of later medieval authors who had tried to reconcile the two figures. In returning to the original sources, Dee and his predecessors were forced to revisit the controversies of intervening generations of historians. On the other hand, Dee's activities across his books amount to more than the compilation of material in one or more locations. Rather than an assembly of excerpts, we are able to trace the evolution of historical method and antiquarian thought in Dee's

⁵³ *idem*, fols. 21v-22r.

⁵⁴ *idem*, rear flyleaf ir.

annotations. He was not content to compile what previous authors (from Leland all the way back to Ptolemy) had written. Instead, Dee was building upon their work. The annotations in the *Historia* then, record a living process of thought as much as they do the writings of an individual thinker.

However, Dee's annotations show that he was not simply out to mine his copy of the *Historia* for verifiable information. He was particularly attentive to any material that could tie the ancient Britons back to their Trojan predecessors or to other elements of ancient culture. His linguistic interests continue to serve him in this investigation. As the Greeks are fighting with Brutus' Trojans in the first books of the *Historia*, Dee notes other uses of the name of the Greek king, Pandrasus, citing a comedy written by Nacostratus of Athens about Pandrosos.⁵⁵ This trend continues while the Trojans are in Britain, as Dee notes the Greek origins of the name Habren, the daughter of Locrine and his mistress, Estrilde, for whom the river Severn gets its name, from the same author.⁵⁶ While more widely read than most, Dee's investigation of Britain's antiquity built upon some of the same methods that had been in use in the preceding decades and centuries. Yet in Dee's mind, the categories of antiquity that he hoped to recover united genealogy, chronology, linguistics, and an additional category that might be called sociological.

References to "Trojan customs" unite Dee's annotations in the *Historia* with several other works of antiquity, the most important being his copy of a printed edition of Dictys and Dares Phrygius. These works first appeared in print in 1472 in both Venice and Cologne. They were frequent productions of the European printers in the century that

⁵⁵ Christ Church, Oxford, Wb.5.12, fol. 2r: "Comedia^m scripsit Nicostratus Atheniensis cui nomen erat Pandrosos. Et vere eius res gestae hic explicate comedia non tragedie materia^m presere possunt."

⁵⁶ Christ Church, Oxford, Wb.5.12, fol. 11v: "Habra, nomen graecum fuisse declarat fabula Nicostrati Atheniensis."

followed.⁵⁷ In Dee's copy, the Basel edition of 1573, the accounts of Dictys and Dares were accompanied by two additional pieces of writing; the first, a translation by Erasmus of a speech given before Menelaus at Troy; the second, a verse summary of Dares attributed to Cornelius Nepos, the volume's supposed translator. Dee bound this work together with a printed copy of the *Iliad*, in a volume with "Belli Troiani scriptores" on the cover and "Troia" written on the foreedge.⁵⁸

The date of acquisition (or the terminus post quam provided by the printing date) puts this volume squarely within the time period that Dee was investigating the Trojans, and within the *Historia* and the *Assertio*, references are made to Dictys in particular, as a source where additional information could be found. At the connection between Helen, Priam, and Pandrusus in the *Historia*, Dee indicates that their speeches in Dictys contain more information about the Trojan horse.⁵⁹ These portions of Dictys' accounts are continuously annotated by Dee, with reference to the horse as a sign of the peace between the Trojans and the Greeks.⁶⁰

Turning to the opening pages of Dictys, a corresponding note links Helen and her children to Britain's history. The note relates that women often gain memory through their posterity, but uses the negative example of Mordred to illustrate this phenomenon. Notes on the facing page further comment on the problems that women pose to republics.⁶¹ However, the topic that Dee is most interested in these works is the similarities of custom between the Greeks and the Britons. Geoffrey of Monmouth had already posited primogeniture as a

⁵⁷ See F. Clark, "Authenticity, Antiquity, and Authority: Dares Phrygius in Early Modern Europe," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 72 (2011): 183-207. An English translation, *The faithful and true story of the destruction of Troie*, appeared in print in London in 1553 (ESTC S110715).

⁵⁸ London, RCP D 139/7.

⁵⁹ Christ Church, Oxford Wb 5.12, fol. 2r.

⁶⁰ London, RCP D 139/7, 124.

⁶¹ London, RCP D 139/7, 7-8

“Trojan custom,” and successive generations of historians and monarchs had called attention to this fact before Dee noted it in his copy of the *Historia*.⁶² However, Dee also notes another similarity in his copy of Dictys: the tendency of both the Britons and the Greeks to name their children variations of their father’s name.⁶³

The combination of Dictys and Dares also gives Dee the chance to read one account against another. Of the two, it would appear that he favors the more “traditional” account of Dictys, noting the “certitudo huius historiae” at the end of the text.⁶⁴ Several annotations in the *De Excidio* compare Dares’ narrative with that of Dictys, down to the individual spelling of Greek names.⁶⁵ However, the two points that Dee appears most interested in are the differing accounts of who leaves Troy, who stays, and the role of the Trojan horse in the city’s fall. While Dee was sympathetic to Dares’ casting of Aeneas and Antenor as traitors—the headline on this page reads “proditio Troiae”—a note at the bottom of the page reads “nihil hic de equo Troiano.”⁶⁶ While the note offers no further comment on whether this omission is a welcome one or not, the deference he gives to Dictys in his annotation makes it seem like a disappointment to Dee, as does Dee’s comment that Dares differs from Dictys in describing who leaves the city of Troy after its fall.⁶⁷

Even though these works were being consulted in conjunction and used for similar purposes, the character of some of the annotations in Dictys suggest that Dee considered the Trojan histories authoritative, but useful in a different way than the British history.

Morals are drawn from battles and key events (the passages on Helen are used to illustrate

⁶² Christ Church, Oxford, Wb.5.12, sig. 17r

⁶³ London, RCP D 139/7, 11. “nota hic Brytannicam nominanti morem, per patrium etiam aetata(?) nomina, vel matrum, vel utrorumque.” See also, A. Grafton, *What Was History?*, 62-63.

⁶⁴ London, RCP D 139/7, 146.

⁶⁵ London, RCP D 139/7, 193.

⁶⁶ idem 196.

⁶⁷ London, RCP D 139/7, 198.

the danger women pose to republics) suggesting Dee also held these accounts as valuable exempla for non-historical works. Like other erudite readers, Dee was on the lookout for details of military tactics in these pseudo-ancient texts, noting the Trojans' lack of a fighting style, the composition of armies, and, of particular interest to Dee, navies and the types of ships they employed.⁶⁸ From these annotations, we see that Dee could, and did, consult his books pointedly and critically, but that he found multiple uses for the works that he read.

Dee's interest in Britain's history also led him to consider another group of people with an ancient pedigree: the Normans. A copy of Thomas Walsingham's *Historia Brevis* and *Ypodigma Neustriæ* is annotated by Dee most effusively around the account of the Normans' descent from the Danes, up until their arrival in England and the succession of power from Stephen to Henry II.⁶⁹ Dee's marginalia follow a similar pattern to those in the *Historia* and the works of Dictys and Dares, tracing the origins of Rollo and the Danes from the Trojans on one side as well as from Ragnar Lothbrok and Bjorn Ironside on the other, augmenting the history first advanced by Dudo of St. Quentin half a millennium previously. Following the lists of concessions given to Rollo, Dee includes all of Britain as well as Normandy.⁷⁰ Family trees in the bottom margins of these pages trace the intersection of the Normans with the Frankish dukes and monarchs through intermarriage, taking particular interest in their relations to the Capetian monarchs through Hugh the Great.

Thus, Dee's emulation of his antiquarian predecessors did not end with Britain's antiquity, however. He made a point of comparing this work, as best as he could, with the

⁶⁸ *ibid.* 169, 178. Naval activity formed a key part of Dee's history reading, and an organizational category for his library. An autograph copy of his library catalog from 1583, now TCC MS O.4.20, lists "historici libri ad navigationem compacti" from pp. 69-71, although none of the books under discussion here appear under that heading. See also Sherman, *John Dee*, 148-200.

⁶⁹ London, RCP D 17 C 11, pp. 3-39.

⁷⁰ London, RCP D 17 C 11, 6.

information available to him from other ancient sources. While the group of books at hand singles out three Trojan peoples: the Britons, Normans, and Romans, Dee's interest in antiquity wandered farther afield, and at times even into the realm of forgery. On the flyleaf of his copy of John Bale's catalogue of British authors is a quotation on the nature of peoples to be more sympathetic to their own origins than those of foreigners.⁷¹ Similar to his Ciceronian inscription in the *Historia*, Dee's addition serves as an introduction to the text for himself and for other readers. In this case, as Frederic Clark points out, this quotation claims to come from an ancient Greek source, its actual source was the mind of the Dominican friar and Renaissance arch-forgery Giovanni Nanni, who had fabricated the inscription, along with a wide range of others, in his *Antiquities*.⁷² While criticism of Annii's work was mounting even during Dee's time, the valuable pieces of long-lost antiquity provided by the *Antiquities* fed into other historical traditions, notably the work of Jean Lemaire de Belges, which Dee also read with little comment.

It can be certain, though, that Dee was invested personally and ideologically in his investigation of Britain's ancient history. Even though his commentary on the later portions of the *Historia* is limited in comparison to the activities of Britain's Trojan kings, a marginal note next to the change of the island's name under Hengist demonstrates that Dee's focus lay in the fate of the island. Dee underlines the passage which states that "the island named after Brutus lost its name to foreigners" and notes in the margin (in English) "shallbye called agayne."⁷³ Unlike previous historical moments, this assertion was no longer wishful thinking

⁷¹ Christ Church Oxford Wb 4 8: "De gentis antiquitate et origine, magis creditur ipsi genti atque uicinis, quam remotis et extremis. Magis igitur creditur ipsis Lydis et Turrhenis atque his uicinis Romanis, et qui consentiunt in eorum patria historia et origine quam quibusuis aliis, quamuis alias eruditissimis. Myrsilus Lesbos in libello de bello Pelasgico cap. 3. Vide Annii annotationes etc."

⁷² F. Clark, "Dividing Time: The Making of Historical Periodization in Early Modern Europe," (Unpublished Ph.D Dissertation: Princeton University, 2014), 56.

⁷³ Christ Church Oxford Wb 5 12, fol. 54r.

or prophetic inclination. Dee was personally involved, through his writing and thought, in cementing and popularizing Britain's status as an imperial power. As Sherman relates, Dee's investigation into Britain's imperial status took a variety of forms: geographical, political, and historical, and all of these can be seen to form, as well as follow, the contours of his reading. While his emphases on cartography earned him notice, both in the generations that followed him and among contemporary historians and biographers, Dee's approach to research borrowed from, and indeed, surpassed in scope and in thoroughness, many of his antiquarian predecessors and contemporaries. His books record not just his patterns of reading and thought, but an evolving web of conversations, some collegial, some critical, with those writers, living and dead, whom Dee saw as his interlocutors.

The interactivity of Dee's reading is one facet of his activity that has not yet been thoroughly explored. As stated at the outset, Dee's monumental library shaped his own thought and the thought of his companions. The annotated pieces of this library also show the evolution of Dee's life through his books, and they do so more comprehensively than the record left by most annotators of his age.⁷⁴ Indeed, within this collection of historical works, it becomes increasingly apparent that we cannot view "Dee's books" as exclusively Dee's. Within the four texts most heavily annotated, some, but not all, of Dee's annotations, are signed I.D. These notes, usually lengthier and explanatory in tone, suggests that Dee wanted his authority explicitly ascribed to them. This would be necessary because, it appears, not all of the marginalia in the books belong to Dee, and not all of his marginal conversations were with books and dead authors.

⁷⁴ Notably his slightly younger contemporary, Gabriel Harvey. See. A. Grafton and L. Jardine, "Studied for Action: How Gabriel Harvey Read his Livy," *Past & Present* 129 (1990): 30-78.

His copy of the *Historia*, for example, bears an inscription which may have been from Humphrey Lloyd, another antiquarian and cartographer.⁷⁵ Lloyd, who died in 1568, was responsible for the publication of some of the earliest maps of Wales and Britain. His works were appended to the pioneering *Theatrus Orbis Terrarum*, and he may have collaborated with Dee as part of a group of Elizabethan geographers. The note in Dee's book comes after a correction, and the name is given in the ablative case (Hunfredo Lloyd). Either the correction is Dee's, and he is ascribing the source to Lloyd, or the use of this book began before Dee's investigations in the 1570s, and the book itself linked Dee to an ongoing and, indeed, groundbreaking series of conversations about territory, cartography, and the fabric of empire.

Other annotations in the book record Dee's ongoing interactions with other individuals over the 1570s. Finally, it has been noted that the flyleaves of the *Historia* record the locations of other stores of historical monuments, but it also leaves a record of his own ongoing family history. Dee's interest in genealogy stemmed from his own pedigree, which he traced in a genealogical roll (now British Library, Cotton Charter XIV). In the *Historia*, he records the first notice given him of his pedigree, along with the death of the bearer.⁷⁶ At a later date, it appears that Dee has gone back and added a coda to this note: "This Rice is dead also." Dee's books can illustrate the evolution of his thought and reading, but they can also demonstrate the extent to which annotation was a public performance, linking Dee's quest for his island's and his own history to concrete locations and transitory individuals.

⁷⁵ Christ Church, Oxford Wb 5 12, fol. 32v.

⁷⁶ *idem.*, rear flyleaf ii verso. "Rice ap howell bedo Dee, otherwise called Rice Ap Howell Dee, dwelling at discod, is executor to his brother Lewys, who gave me the first note of my pedigree ... 1567." See Sherman, John Dee 106-7.

III. The Civic Arthur: *Learned and True Assertion*

The final iteration of Leland's *Assertio* to be discussed in this chapter is not itself an annotated copy, but rather an edition and translation that appeared from one. In 1582, an English translation of the *Assertio*, titled *A Learned and True Assertion of King Arthur*, issued from the press of John Wolfe.⁷⁷ Its translator, Richard Robinson, dedicated the work to the Society of Archers, as well as to three of its chief members: Arthur Gray, Henry Sidney, and Mr. Thomas Smith, Customer of the Port of London. Drawing on a mix of Biblical, historical, and romantic influences, Robinson's dedication praised the bow and its uses in Biblical imagery and allegory, before abruptly moving to praise the first Britons and, especially Arthur. Both Leland's work and the Society of Archers enjoyed the patronage of Henry VIII, which appears to be the discernible reason for the translation. Wishing the society and its leadership peace, Robinson ends the oration as "Your Honourable Lordships and most worthy Worships humble and faithfull poore Orator."⁷⁸

Robinson's career as a translator and "faithful poor orator" stretched from the 1570s into the first decade of the seventeenth century, and it was marked by a series of fluctuating fortunes. During this time, he translated, or helped translate, some twenty-four works: predominantly moral and religious literature, but also classical moral literature and histories. These works, printed in small octavo or quarto editions, were all printed by Wolfe prior to 1592. In 1603, Robinson compiled a list of all his printed works in a manuscript he called the *Eupolemia*, recording their dedicatees and the rewards—or lack thereof—he received in what

⁷⁷ Richard Robinson trans. *A Learned and True Assertion of the Life, Actes, and Death of the most noble and valliant King Arthur*, (London: John Wolfe, 1582)

⁷⁸ *Learned and True Assertion*, sig. B1v.

has been called an early attempt to assert intellectual property.⁷⁹ The dedicatees of these works range from London's clerical and mercantile elite to Royal counselors and even the Queen herself. From a bibliographical standpoint, it is unique in sixteenth-century literature. Furthermore, the *Eupolemia* is not a mere catalogue, but an attempt at the *curriculum vitae* of a translator's efforts, similar to the one which John Dee had compiled a decade earlier. Like Dee's *Compendious Rehearsall*, Robinson's *Eupolemia* was also a petition for redress to Elizabeth, and records the pleas of a desperate man.

Robinson's career ended in destitution and misery. The *Eupolemia* records a failed attempt at securing the Queen's patronage in 1595 and a series of unsuccessful suits for support from the Mayors and aldermen of London. Robinson recounts, though does not name, a "false slander" around 1593 that sent him on a downward spiral among the London elites. The manuscript bitterly describes Robinson's spurned efforts in furthering pious religion, how he had been forced to sell his goods and his home to support his wife and child (who, a marginal insertion notes, died of consumption in 1598). In 1602, Thomas Churchyard, who collaborated with Robinson on several of his translations, called him "a man more debased by many than he merits of any, so good parts there are in the man."⁸⁰ Philip Vogt, in his edition of Robinson's *Eupolemia*, Vogt considered the formulaic, often hackneyed topics of Robinson's dedications, along with his abundant alliteration (Leland's detractors are a "cancered currish kinde of cavelling carpers"), and placed the translator in "in that large class of sad fellows who long to get on, but who have mistaken their calling."⁸¹

⁷⁹ G. Vogt, "Richard Robinson's *Eupolemia* (1603)," *Studies in Philology* 21.4 (1924): 629-48. Unless otherwise noted, all citations to the *Eupolemia* refer to Vogt's edition of the manuscript.

⁸⁰ STC 17846, sig A3r.

⁸¹ sig. A4 v, Vogt, "*Eupolemia*," 630. Some of Robinson's prologues are considered in connection with the *Eupolemia* in H. Hackel, *Reading Material in Early Modern England: Print, Gender, and Literacy* (Cambridge:

That Leland's works would ultimately fall into the hands of an Elizabethan hack might seem to be a fitting testament to the British history's influence. And yet Robinson's work pulls together many of the threads that have been running through this chapter, while adding another layer of civic involvement. Aside from the dedication, Robinson adds several short items to the *Assertio* as preface: some references to Joseph of Arimathea as Arthur's ancestor, as well as versions of Arthur's coat of arms and a list of all of the kings and knights Arthur is said to have commanded. Aside from consulting other books and works, Robinson also claims to have enlisted the assistance of John Stow and William Camden, "diligent searchers of antiquities," to decode the ancient names of British and Welsh towns.⁸² References to Stow's and Camden's assistance take the form of a running gloss printed into the margins of the *Assertion*, which also provides a summary of the narration for the reader.

In the *Eupolemia*, however, Robinson reveals that the reading of the *Assertio* is not entirely his, but that of a "Stephen Batman, Parson of Newington Buttes."⁸³ Batman and Robinson were near contemporaries, and longtime London residents. Batman held the priory of Newington, nearby Lambeth Palace, from 1571. Batman's interests in spiritual matters coincided with Robinson's, but the parson's activities in connection with Parker also reveal a strong urge to reconcile classical and medieval writings with the new doctrines of Protestant theology. This perhaps explains not only the references to Camden (whom Batman counted as a friend), but also the inclusion of information about Joseph of

Cambridge University Press, 2005), 105-112. To date no further bibliographical details of Robinson's life have been verified or uncovered.

⁸² *Learned and True Assertion*, sig. B3r.

⁸³ Vogt, *Eupolemia*, 635.

Arimathea's connections to Arthur.⁸⁴ The printed editions, then, preserve a reading of the *Assertio* as well as a translation of its text.

The inclusion of the list of Arthur's knights fits in with the influence of a different group, the Company of Archers. In the following year, Wolfe printed another short work of Robinson's, "perused and approved" by Batman and the Wardens of the stationer's company.⁸⁵ The *Order of Arthure* was presented to Smith and the members of the Company on the occasion of their meeting. Robinson's dedication provides a slightly expanded history of the Company, referencing its support by Henry VIII and perhaps the size of its membership - "the 300, which in this cite for this purpose excell others in worthiness of learning, liberal art or humane dexteritie."⁸⁶ The *Eupolemia* elaborates on the activities of this yearly meeting as a re-enactment of Arthur's round table, with Smith playing the prince.⁸⁷

An encomium in its entirety, this book is partly a translation of a treatise on the blazing of arms, part spiritual and institutional history. The section on arms contains fifty-eight blank roundels representing the arms of Arthur's knights, with verses on each below. Initials can be found next to many, but not all, of these roundels, and it appears that each represents the adopted name of a member of the society. Smith's arms, along with those of the Queen, are printed at the fore, and Robinson would later note in his record of patronage

⁸⁴ ODNB, "Batman, Stephen (c.1542-1584). doi:10.1093/ref:odnb/1704. One of Batman's MS commonplace books survives as Harvard, Houghton MS Eng. f 1015. Batman also copied texts, including Anglo-Saxon manuscripts, for Matthew Parker. See S. Ekhardt, "Containing the Book: The Institutional Afterlives of Medieval Manuscripts," in *The Medieval Manuscript Book: Cultural Approaches*, ed. M. Johnston and M. Van Dussen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 2015), 96-118, 98.

⁸⁵ R. Robinson, *The Ancient Order, Society, and Unitie Landable of Prince Arthur, and his Knightly Armory of the Round Table* (London: John Wolfe, 1583); Vogt, *Eupolemia*, 636.

⁸⁶ Robinson, *Ancient Order*, sig. ***3r.

⁸⁷ Vogt, *Eupolemia*, 636.

that “his 56 knightes gave mee every one for his xviii d. and every Esq for his book viij d. pece (apiece) when they shott under the same Prince Arthure at Myles End greene.”⁸⁸

More so than the *Assertio*, the *Order of Arthure* is a clear attempt at patronage, intended to extract reward from a limited audience at a very specific time. However, the connections that enabled the production of both books, and Robinson’s misadventures in the corridors of London’s elite, demonstrate how the worlds of antiquarianism, godly spirituality, and mercantile achievement intersected with one another. In the Company of Archers, Robinson was appealing not only to the foremost men of the city for patronage, but also, if his dedication can be believed, commemorating an institution that had its roots in Henry VIII’s attempts to commemorate his son, Prince Arthur, in the 1540s.⁸⁹ The publication of the work hints at enduring collaborations between Robinson, Batman, Wolfe, and even Thomas Churchwarden, whose dedicatory poem in praise of the Bow appears at the beginning of the book, and who may have been a member of the Order himself.⁹⁰ In Robinson’s mind, and likely those of his collaborators and patrons, the Trojan and British roots of these institutions still had a role to play within the grander schemes of sacred and profane history.

The public ritual of these occasions also represents the evolution of what Arthur Ferguson describes as “civic chivalry” and its resurgence in a climate of expansion and war with Spain.⁹¹ Ferguson locates the origins of these rituals in the chivalric literature of Malory

⁸⁸ Vogt, *Eupolemia*, 636.

⁸⁹ *Ancient Order*, sig. ***2r-v. Robinson’s dedication traces the practice of shooting and its connections to King Arthur’s round table back even further, to the time of Edward I.

⁹⁰ Three separate coats of Arms, blank in the Huntington copy, have the initials T.C. (D3 v, F1v, H4r).

⁹¹ A. Ferguson, *The Chivalric Tradition in Renaissance England* (Washington, DC: Folger Library, 1986), 11-12. See also C. Sponsler, *The Queen’s Dumbshows: John Lydgate and the Making of Early Theater* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014). William Hunt describes the Company of Archers as the antecedent to the seventeenth-century Artillery Company in “Civic Chivalry and the English Civil War,” in *The*

and Caxton, augmented by an increasingly focused sense of the past. By the time of Elizabeth I, the vision of knightly deeds, as well as the awareness of anachronism, led Ferguson to question whether those involved in the resurrection of chivalric ideals were engaging in the first blushes of romanticism in the history of England. This assumption leads him to suggest that Elizabethan authors who approached Arthur had not learned to treat him as an ahistorical figure, despite the best efforts of Camden and the humanists.⁹²

The evidence from the Company of Archers, scarce as it is, paints a slightly different picture. On the one hand, it appears compatible. The company's revels appear more ceremonial than martial, and Churchyard's defense of a manly, ancient, and, in their eyes nationalist weapon (the bow) in the face of technology does promote pageantry like this as longing for earlier times, or perhaps (in the appropriation of Arthurian imagery), times that its members knew never existed. However, these actions go hand in hand with a sense of history that is not uniformly antique or legendary, but characteristically English. In reviving these ceremonies, the members of the Company of Archers linked themselves to the pageantry of such earlier English monarchs as Edward I, III, and Henry VII. Just as this English tradition sat alongside classical and Biblical models, the use of legend and history did not need to be mutually exclusive. On the contrary, the customary practice of the company—masquerade—had its place amid institutional and national history, just as it had for centuries in the trappings of royal display.

Transmission of Culture in Early Modern Europe, ed. A. Grafton and A. Blair (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1990), 204-37.

⁹² Ferguson, *Chivalric Tradition*, 130-7.

Conclusion: *Recte intelligenda* - Britain's History at the Close of the Sixteenth Century

In 1585, three years after the publication of the *Assertio*, another antiquarian compilation revisited the question of Britain's early history and came to its defense: *Pontici Virunnii viri doctissimi Britannicae historiae libri sex, magna et fide et diligentia conscripti*. Like the *Learned and True Assertion*, it also bore a dedication to Sir Henry Sidney, chief of Elizabeth's council in the marches of Wales. However, its editor and compiler was a known patron: David Powell, Sidney's chaplain. As the work's subtitle suggested, Powell had produced an edition of Geoffrey of Monmouth, or rather, its abridgement by the Italian author Ponticus Virunnus, together with Gerald of Wales' *Descriptio Cambriae*, but he had taken pains to correct the text with the most ancient British histories, and to purge it of errors.⁹³ In both its language and its example, Powell's dedicatory prologue draws heavily on the historical and antiquarian works that had been produced over the past half century. In his view, the ancient British history is crammed full of inane commentary and fabulous detail, even as it enjoys the public support of venerable antiquity as well the assent of learned men of every station.⁹⁴

Powell's method is further explained in a letter printed in the volume, the *Britanniae Historiae Recte Intelligenda*. Addressed to William Fleetwood, recorder of London (and investigator of the Customs of London), the letter records a conversation that the two men had about the state of Britain's antiquities. In the letter, Powell begins by lamenting the state of historical investigation. In his view, it was marred by two groups of people, those who held the British history to be totally false, and those who, on the contrary, believed

⁹³ D. Powell ed. *Ludovicus Virinius Viri Doctissimi Britannicae Historiae Libri Sex* (London: Henry Denham and R. Newberry, 1585), sig. A1r. Powell's subtitle runs as follows: "*ad Britannici codicis fidem correcti, & ab infinitis mendis liberati: quibus praefixus est catalogus Regum Britanniae.*"

⁹⁴ Powell, *Britannicae historiae libri sex*, sig. A3r.

everything associated with it too easily. These groups, Powell asserts, were “lovers not of the investigation of historical truth, but rather of the need to defend a possession from the violent attack of enemies of some sort of siege warfare,” whose judgment needed to be replaced with that of moderate, thoughtful men.⁹⁵ Powell removed items which he saw as lying outside the bounds of most ancient versions of the history (miracles, transformations, and the soothsayings of Merlin) and denoted three faculties that allow antiquarians to produce a usable British past. The first is their skill in untangling the local histories of the provinces of Britain, the second their ability to put aside the natural love of one’s country that colored the relation of *res gestae*, and the third their drive to understand the ancient names of places.⁹⁶

In its materials, reasoning, and, ultimately, its conclusions, Powell’s work was not groundbreaking. The tools of historical inquiry he employed—place names, the bias of different authors, and the makeup of Britain’s ancient kingdoms— would have been welcomed by historians nearly two centuries earlier. The frequency with which chronology and archeology were used certainly had increased, but as the centuries wore on it must have become apparent that no conclusive proof could be found to either eliminate Brutus and the Trojans from the history of Britain or to completely endorse them.

Yet while his method does not differ much from the approaches taken by Leland, Lambarde, and Dee, all of these men are talking and arguing about the past in ways that were not as prevalent before the sixteenth century. The new currents of learning that began before the arrival of print had greatly changed the breadth and, especially, the rhetoric of historical

⁹⁵ Powell, *Britannicae historiae libri sex*, 280. “Quos omnes, si sibi constare velint, & melioris cuiusdam naturae bonitate allecti aliquando non mitescant: non ad historiae veritatem investigandam, sed ad propugnaculi cuiusdam obsessi possessionem, a violento hostium impetu defendendam, ubi pertinax & accurata defensio et non diliberatae rationis consideratio requiritur, adhibendos atque amandandos esse sentiebam.”

⁹⁶ idem, 281.

inquiry from its late medieval precedents. Where the compilers of the Latin *Bruts* set out to remake history by collecting as much evidence and ornament as possible, the antiquarians set out to debate history using these means.

Furthermore, Powell's book ties together all of the authors in this chapter both in its subject and in the personal connections of its author. In his letter to Fleetwood, Powell asks for his help in compiling such a history "in the absence of our Lambarde," and Powell's interest in Wales also led him to continue the work of Humphrey Lloyd.⁹⁷ The collaborative and editorial nature of many of these works, in fact, makes it possible to see a web of influences: patronage, authority, but also amity behind each one. As with Dee's annotations, the investigation of Britain's ancient past involved a conversation with ancient, modern, and even contemporary authors. In Powell's statements on the value of history, we also observe a formulation that had been evolving since at least the time of Leland's *Assertio*: that the study of history, along with its correction and emendation, was undertaken out of love for one's country, and that this was the main reason that the history of the Britons had been preserved.⁹⁸

Finally, the affiliations present among these different groups of books give a sense of how many uses still abounded for the ancient history of England and the powerful effect the Trojans had on the late medieval history of England. As Leland's work demonstrated, it was not possible to return and to isolate Geoffrey of Monmouth in his own time. Rather, these men followed their sources back through time and around the country, searching for a past that raised more questions than it could answer.

⁹⁷ "Powel [Powell] David (1549x52–1598)," ODNB, doi:10.1093/ref:odnb/22643. Last Accessed 3/26/2017.

⁹⁸ Powell, *Britannicae historiae libri sex*, sig. A1v.

In attempting to sort out history from legend, these historians call our attention to how influential and interchangeable both were within Tudor England. Their writing, reading, and publications demonstrate how conventional, anecdotal, and familiar uses of history put pressure on its scholarly investigation. In order to be useful, the past needed to be made legitimate. Yet in the pages of their books, we can see the debate over Britain's early history provide a spur to all sorts of new and varied activity. Leland's Arthurian polemic became the fuel for topographical, personal, and genealogical investigations into England's British (and non-British) past, much in the way that Livy's *Decades* was employed by members of the same circles as a political as well as a moral work.⁹⁹

The origin legend had evolved significantly since Geoffrey of Monmouth's time, yet it could never be made to fit with the Roman works it was compared with. In their attempts to square a circle, however, the writers who grappled with the validity of their ancient history reveal the multitude of locations that history had become embedded. Furthermore, when the reading and use of England's past is taken into account, not only are divergent purposes present, but also they appear to intersect with each other. For Lambarde, Leland's work provided information, a model for inquiry, and a traveling companion on his own investigations. Dee saw the Britons as valuable for an imperial history of England and as the connection to Troy, Greece, and even the tribes of Israel. A member of the Company of Archers such as Sir Henry Sidney might fancifully assume the role of an Arthurian knight while arguing that Arthur himself was both the traditional and historical cornerstone of his order, and strictly enforce the sense of Arthurian chivalry and British imperialism as Protector of Ireland.

⁹⁹ Grafton and Jardine, "Studied for Action," 44.

Thus, while the polemicists had drawn their battle lines firmly, the writing and, particularly, the reading of these historical defenses affords historians the ability to do more than fill in the ranks on either side. Instead, we see how the opportunistic use of these texts provided material for numerous understandings of the ancient past, and that past's role within a broader historical culture.¹⁰⁰ All throughout the sixteenth century, Britain's ancient history remained critical to the development of its national, religious, and civic identities. If the methods and, indeed, the evidence of these inquiries are seen as continuations and, in the case of manuscripts and books, re-readings of those that came before them, it is not as surprising that so much of Britain's legendary past remained compatible with historical inquiry. Likewise, as scholarly investigation moves from the questions of historical accuracy and credibility to explore the question of history's role within the larger culture of Tudor reading and learning, we find more inhabitants of the ground that Powell proposed to Fleetwood – not unwavering allies or staunch detractors, Britons and Romans, ancients and moderns—but rather individuals who had to account for the prevalence of the Britons in England's landscape as well as its literature.

¹⁰⁰ Woolf, *Social Circulation*, 9.

Conclusion: Troy Renewed

*New Troy my name: when first my fame begun
By Trajon (sic) Brute: who then me placed here
On fruitfull soyle: where pleasant Thames doth run
Sith Lud my Lord, my King and Lover dear,
Encreast my bounds: and London (far that rings
Through Regions large) he called then my name
How famous since (I stately seat of Kings)
Have flourish'd aye: let others that proclaim.
And let me joy thus happy still to see
This Virtuous Peer my Sovereign king to be.*

In or around 1560, a woodcut map of London, now commonly known as the Agas map, first appeared in print. Two text legends give the age of the city of London from its foundation by Brutus and its expansion by Lud, along with the verse rendition above. The surviving copies of the map, produced after 1603, incorporate the royal arms of James I and modify the age of the city—and likely the wording of the poem's last line—to adapt them to the later monarch.¹ In the center of the map, at the eastern approach of St. Paul's Church, is Ludgate, evidence of the city's ancient stature. Between 1560 and 1603, observers of the city were encouraged to view the current fame of London as an outgrowth of the city's ancient foundation and expansion. Chief among those offering encouragement was the antiquary and author John Stow.²

To a modern observer, Stow's surviving work appears as a mixture of old and new influences. During the reign of Elizabeth, Stow's name would be synonymous with the

¹ A digital facsimile of the map is available at <https://mapoflondon.uvic.ca/agas.htm>. For the inscriptions in the surviving prints, see G. Stanley ed. *A Biographical and Critical Dictionary of Painters and Engravers* (London: 1849), 681.

² See A. Hiatt, "John Stow, Citizen and Historian," in *John Stow (1525-1605) and the Making of the English Past*, ed. I. Gadd and A. Gillespie (London: British Library, 2004), 13-28.

creation of chronicle histories and the controversies that surrounded them. He dedicated most of his efforts to producing and updating England's chronicles, compiling a *Summarie of the Chronicles of England*, as well as a longer work, now known as the *Annales of England*.³ Stow's production of chronicles showed a fixation over detail. It also fueled a public rivalry with the printer Richard Grafton, who Stow accused of sloppy and hackneyed work, presenting his own *Summarie* as a much needed correction to Grafton's *Abridgement of Chronicles*. Indeed, Stow suggested that the printer had fabricated his edition of John Hardyng's *Chronicle*, since Stow had seen a similarly titled work with a vastly different text.⁴ Apart from his published works, Stow's name was appended as an authority to other historical writings. His work (and name) provided the gloss for Robinson's translation of the *Assertio*, and he also lent his authority to the second edition of Holinshed's *Chronicles*.⁵

Where chronicles like the *Brut* were the most common sources of history reading in the fifteenth and early sixteenth century, Stow's abridgments assumed that mantle for the Elizabethan era. Fifteen editions of the *Summarie of Englishe Chronicles* were printed between 1565 and 1598, with updated information included by Stow, sometimes as often as twice a year.⁶ His early abridgments mixed the content and structure of the *Brut* with that of the London city chronicles, using Mayors as well as monarchs as a way to order the succession of time. As with the printed editions of the *Chronicles of England*, Stow's *Summarie*, along with his more detailed *Annales*, began with indices as well as a description of the land of Britain, furthering the convergence between Geoffrey of Monmouth's work and the *Brut*.

³ STC 23333. The original title of the book was *A Chronicle of England from Brute vnto this present Year of Christ 1580*.

⁴ D. Woolf, *Reading History in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); See also M. McKisack, *Medieval History in the Tudor Age*, 112-14.

⁵ A. Patterson, *Reading Holinshed's Chronicles*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994).

⁶ Woolf, *Reading History*, 36-43.

However, reading the chronicle history of England in the *Annales* uncovers significant changes from the narrative that the *Bruts* offered. Stow dismissed the story of Albina, offering instead an etymology from the giant Albion, killed by Hercules in France. More importantly, Stow suggested that the Noachian history of Britain, and of all other peoples of Europe, was irrecoverable “as to bee wished and appurtinent to this purpose.”⁷ In contrast to Bale’s guarded optimism that “we have not yet the truth” about the ancient origins of England, Stow was ready to shelve the question at least in part, provided his continental colleagues would do the same.

As evidence of the risks of pursuing the pre-Trojan origins of Britain, he offered the censure and critique of a “small pamphlet falsely forged, and thrust into the world under the title of the ancient Historian *Berosus*.”⁸ Stow thus used the discovery of Anniius of Viterbo’s forged antiquities to justify beginning the history of Britain on more solidly supported ground: Brutus and the Trojans. The description of Brutus’ arrival in Britain included the dates of his arrival (reckoned from the beginning of the world and from Christ’s birth), as well as a digression about the arms Brutus bore, taken from numerous authorities.⁹ These historians were cited in a printed marginal gloss, which kept track of the years BC and AD, as well as the key developments of Britain’s kings—the cities and laws they founded—and the places where the line of descent failed. Stow’s printed *Annales*, in other words, amalgamates the features of historical reading, writing, and critique that had been developing in copies of chronicle histories over the centuries, gathering them into one place.

⁷ STC 23333, pg. 15.

⁸ *ibid.* see also A. Grafton, “Traditions of Invention and the Invention of Tradition: The Strange Case of Anniius of Viterbo,” in *The Transmission of Culture in Early Modern Europe*, ed. A. Grafton and A. Blair (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1990), 8-38; W. Stephens, “When Pope Noah Ruled the Etruscans: Anniius of Viterbo and his Forged *Antiquities*,” *MLN* 119 Supplement (2004) S201-23, and above, Chapter 6, p. 258.

⁹ STC 23333, 17-18. The dates given by Stow for Brutus’ arrival in both the *Annales* and the *Summary of Chronicles* coincide with those given on the Agas Map.

All throughout his life, Stow presented himself as a diligent searcher of England's antiquities, traveling around the country to view records and gather sources, some of which were included in his topographical *Survey of London*, first printed in 1598. In the *Survey*, Stow touched briefly on the antiquity of the city of London, mentioning the Galfridian origins with some skepticism. While he did not reject all of what Geoffrey had written about the city's foundation by Brutus, he did differ from Roman authorities in explaining the naming and conquest of Troynovant. He excused Geoffrey's statements on the origins of Britain, however, by putting them on the same ground as the Romans, forgiving the inaccuracies in both with reference to Livy: "Antiquitie is pardonable, and hath an especial priuiledge, by interlacing diuine matters with humane, to make the first foundation of Cities more honourable, more sacred, and as it were of greater maiestie."¹⁰ Stow's entry on Ludgate duly mentions the Galfridian origins of the wall without much comment. It also reveals the history that the gate had developed since then. The gate, he relates, was adorned with "[i]mages of *Lnd*, and other Kings, as appeareth by letters pattents, of licence giuen to the Citizens of London, to take vp stone for that purpose, dated the 45. of *Henrie* the third." Those images, defaced in Edward IV's time, had been repaired by Mary, and finally renewed by Elizabeth I,

newly and beautifully builded, with the Images of *Lnd*, and others, as afore, on the East side, and the picture of her Maiestie, Queene *Elizabeth* on the West side. All which was done at the common charges of the Citizens, amounting to 1500. poundes or more.¹¹

¹⁰ A. Fraser and H. Morley ed. *A Survey of London, Written in the Year 1598, by John Stow* (Stroud, Gloucs.: Alan Sutton, 1994), 33.

¹¹ *Survey of London*, 67-68.

Long before Elizabeth had added herself to the iconography of London, the processions through the city described by the *Bruts* had passed before visual reminders of England's legendary kings.¹²

Stow's notes from the period survive in various places, among them in several loose booklets bound into London, Lambeth Palace MS 306.¹³ The quires in Lambeth 306 are bound into the manuscript out of order, but contain observations for the years 1560-1567 on a variety of different topics, many of interest to happenings in the city. Stow records, among other things, the effects of the outbreak of plague, shortages of food, and storms, but he also preserves accounts of the punishment of heretics, their confessions, and other London news involving the behavior of clergy. At the start of one of these gatherings, Stow provides an account of the steeple of St. Paul's cathedral being struck by lightning on 4 June 1561 "betwene 4 & 5 of y^e clocke y^e afternoon."¹⁴ In keeping with the religious nature of his other notes, Stow moralizes his description of the cross falling (unburnt) from the spire. He describes the destruction of the room as a

pytyfull remembraunce to all people yt have ye feare of god before their eyes, consyderynge it was y^e hous of oure lord erected to prays hym & pray to hym, ye beauty of y^e syte of london ye beauty of y^e holle reallme.¹⁵

¹² And, perhaps figures of giants as well. Records of giants representing Gogmagog and Corineus in civic procession date back from the time of Henry V. See V. Scherb, "Assimilating Giants: The Appropriation of Gog and Magog in Medieval and Early Modern England." *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 32 (2002): 59-84; J. Cohen, *Of Giants: Sex, Monsters and the Middle Ages* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), 29-31 and especially D. Woolf, *The Social Circulation of the Past: English Historical Culture 1500-1730* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2003), 329-32.

¹³ Lambeth Palace MS 306, fols. 46v-72v. The notes begin following the end of a London chronicle and continue, intermittently, through three unsigned gatherings of parchment to fol. 72v.

¹⁴ London, Lambeth Palace MS 306, fol. 63v. The *Survey* relates a different instance of the steeple being struck by lightning, in February of 1444, *Survey* i, around 320. (present citations are to an online version of Kendrick's edition and lack definite page numbers)

¹⁵ *ibid.*

At the top of the page, Stow has cast this episode not only in terms of divine foreboding, but also as “[t]he destruction of troinovaunt.” Stow notes fuse religion, antiquity, and civic interest and suggest that all three played a part in his investigation of daily life in London.

Combining Stow’s notes with his writings in the *Survey*, then, we see different uses for Britain’s past, legendary as well as recent. In his investigations of London (and Britain’s) antiquity, he felt no compunction to either adapt or reject Geoffrey of Monmouth’s accounts wholeheartedly. Instead, he viewed Britain’s history through the lens of civic practice. Whether or not the walls of London could have been built by Lud, in Stow’s estimation, mattered less than the history that was taking place around them. Along with the ancient etymologies of the city, the history was built into the fabric of London, and had been for centuries. Likewise, such fixtures of Britain’s ancient history as Brutus’ oracle were worth mentioning in connection with the city’s worthy men, as were ancient luminaries like Constantine the Great.¹⁶ Even though these figures were now treated with increasing skepticism by antiquaries and historians (including Stow himself), the long history they had enjoyed from Geoffrey of Monmouth on made them valuable not just for civic identity, but also for new genres of literature that invoked the history of the ancient Britons.

Stow’s *Annales* also contains greatly expanded accounts of two peasant revolts that took place in England: the rising of the commons of Kent and Essex against Richard II and Henry VI. The chronicle in Lambeth 306 has notes appended to it on the latter, and the booklets Stow compiled contain two passages detailing the complaints of the Commons against misrule. These additions are noted as “written out of davyd nocryn hys boke,”

¹⁶ *Survey of London*, 129-30.

preserving a record not just of the information Stow gathered, but of the community he gathered it from.

Like Stow's notes, the contents of Lambeth 306 reflect the fusion of different layers, owners, and interests. At the beginning of the work is an abbreviated copy of the *Brut*, written in a mid-fifteenth century hand, beginning with Albina and giving the years and slim details of the kings up to Henry IV. The same hand continued with a London chronicle from the reign of Richard I up to the beginning of Edward IV's reign. These sections have been annotated either by Stow or by another sixteenth-century reader to provide additional reference for the kings, regnal years, and dates of important events.¹⁷ Later on, as part of a series of poems in praise of Edward IV's lineage, the manuscript records his reception at Bristol by figures portraying William the Conqueror, his receipt of the keys to the city from a giant, and a re-enactment of St. George fighting a dragon.¹⁸ Finally, at the end of the volume is a manuscript copy of parts of Wynkyn de Worde's edition of the *Book of Hunting*, along with a printed copy of Caxton's *Life of St. Winnefred*e with historical notes appended at the mentions of Stephen and Henry I.¹⁹

Lambeth 306, then, could have featured in any of the earlier chapters of the dissertation, as it has in the isolated studies that have made use of it.²⁰ Indeed, the authors of these studies might not have known that they were referring to the same manuscript, since

¹⁷ This hand has features in common with Stow's notes, and at this time it is unclear whether the difference reflects Stow's writing changing over time, or the hasty manner which the notes were recorded.

¹⁸ Ibid. 132r.

¹⁹ Ibid, 193v, 194v.

²⁰ Ruch comments on the uniqueness of its Albina prologue in *Albina and Her Sisters: the Foundation of Albion* (Cambria Press, 2013). See also Bernau, "Beginning with Albina: Remembering the Nation," *Exemplaria* 21 (2009): 247-73, 255, where one of the poems in Lambeth 306 is cited as evidence of the multiple uses of history and memory (without mentioning the historical content of the volume).

two separate editions of texts have been made from Lambeth 306, one of the historical material and the other of its poetry.²¹

However useful these individual elements are, isolating them erases an important element of what it meant to read history in the Middle Ages and, indeed, in early modern England. Lambeth 306 is unruly, cobbled together, and thoroughly used. The evolution of the manuscript is a clear reminder that the phenomena here discussed as characterizing fourteenth-, fifteenth-, or even sixteenth-century thought had ramifications for history reading and history writing long after their initial phases of development. The annotation and expansion of Lambeth 306 grew with time and with the interests of its community of readers, Stow chief among them. The manuscript gathers historical information on a wide range of topics from an equally varied range of sources, placing that information alongside poems, medical recipes, lists of banned books, and copies of documents, seemingly wherever space could be found. Lambeth 306 represents, in other words, not just one person's reading of history, but its own network of influences and interests, sandwiched between two leather-covered boards and kept for posterity.

Yet a key part of the history of historical reading and learning in England is the history of books such as this one. While Lambeth 306 fuses the reading of history with civic, religious, and other recreational interests, it is not the only book in this dissertation that could do so. As its contents and its readership evolved over time, it challenged successive generations to understand it; to decipher and decode it, and finally to add to it. As such, it

²¹ *Political, Religious, and Love Poems: Published From the Archbishop of Canterbury's Lambeth MS No. 306, and Other Sources*, ed. F. Furnivall. EETS OS 15 (London: Trubner, 1886), rev. 1903; *Three Fifteenth-Century Chronicles with Historical Memoranda by John Stow*, ed. J. Gairdner (London: Camden Society, 1880). Gairdner's introduction gives a fuller sense of the manuscript, but offers the following assessment of the parts printed by Furnivall. "The reader has now before him everything that is of a distinctly historical character in the Lambeth Volume No. 306. That volume, however, also contains, as will be seen by the catalogue, a quantity of poetry, medical receipts, and scraps of various kinds, which do not, generally speaking, greatly repay perusal."

represents the processes of historical reading as much as the product of individual compilation or inquiry. In other words, while the manuscript compilation may tell us many specific things about its owners, readers, or composition of its texts, it can also be linked to more general and wide-ranging contexts than the history of reading or of book production.

In tracing the outlines of Britain's ancient history from their Galfridian origins up to the reign of Elizabeth, this dissertation has covered much political and chronological ground. In doing so, it makes two key contributions to our understanding of historical reading across the entire period. First, it assesses the contents of history books, their annotations as well as their texts, over longer stretches of time. Manuscript compilations, particularly anonymous ones, provide very narrow views of specific periods, since their contents reflect the entire history of their use, rather than the circumstances of their creation. Rather than static artifacts, they are the records of their own history. Over time, then, compilations like the Latin *Brut*, the printed *Chronicles*, and "miscellaneous" works such as Lambeth 306 all can demonstrate how their audiences evolve over time. They also provide crucial evidence not just for the creation of new works—as the copy texts of printers or the sources of new historical compilations—but to the climate of reading and thought that produced those works.

Scholars, both of literature and of the book, have a tendency to refer to the "afterlives" of texts and artifacts, as they move out of the period of their primary influence. This dissertation suggests caution in the use of that term. The texts and books that were handed down throughout the Middle Ages continued to exert influence on the thought of early modern authors and readers, just as they carry the marks of that influence with them. They were not treated as curiosities or antiques either by scholars or by the families whose

inscriptions, birth notices, and doodles adorn their pages. In order to be useful to the readers and authors of Tudor England, old books could not be passively received, but needed to be actively reconciled with the needs of their readers. Their contents needed to be evaluated and contextualized, beginning, in some cases, with attempts to identify the work, as the number of *Brut* manuscripts that bear the inscription “*Caxton’s Chronicle*” on their initial pages attest. The censorship of books, whether of content judged heretical or of the evidence of past owners, indicates that not all material could be adapted to suit changing times.

Second, in charting the evolution, and the variation, in the history contained in chronicles like the *Bruts*, the dissertation outlines a changing approach to reading history as much as a change in the history that was being read. The manuscripts and printed books that fall outside the mainstream of their textual traditions—the ‘miscellaneous,’ the ‘peculiar,’ the manuscripts that nineteenth-century cataloguers simply designated *varia*—do this especially well. Since they refuse easy categorization, they do not make sense on their own. They require readers to supply the necessary context, and the ways those readers made sense of their books remain visible in the addition or modification of their contents, and in the chance connections, corrections, and encounters with the past preserved in annotations.

One book, or even a whole series of related books, however, can never be emblematic of the place of a history in English society. This particularly subset of books, however, provide an essential starting point both for enumerating the variety of interpretations that could be brought to bear upon histories and for following those influences as they combine across time and space. Studying a chronicle tradition is thus illuminating in one very important aspect. In reading and understanding history, successive

generations of Englishmen first needed to rationalize the past that had been handed down to them, whether in terms of its narrative or in terms of the physical copies of histories they inherited, bought, or borrowed.

The methods that readers employed evolved over the period, as did the range of uses to which history could be put, but some of the initial tools remained consistent. By establishing connections between places, dates, and figures, the past could be made useful. Once those associations were made, however, they were difficult to undo, and could be complemented or challenged from many different angles. If a common thread runs through all of these historical narratives, from Geoffrey on forward, it is that readers and authors felt free to make the Trojans fit their own circumstances. Once uttered, they could not simply be shut away in oblivion, because they interacted with, as well as transmitted, the traditions of intellectual, social, and political activity already in place in England.

In late medieval England and, as I suggest, well into the early modern period, chronicles such as the *Brut* continued to be a common location where English readers encountered their ancient past. Though they were not the only such location, they were the glue that held all of the uses of the Trojans together. Chronicles such as the *Bruts* were points of convergence, not just between histories but between historical consciousness and all other forms of learning in medieval England. They were frameworks into which all manner of material could be fit, and they provided details that supplemented England's stories of saints and heroes, as well as the views the English held of the world they inhabited. Chronicles were thus extremely present, active, and mimetic: gathering meaning from and fueling contemporary rituals that made use of the past. However, they were also increasingly grounded, both within time and within the confines of historical writing. To modify Joanna

Bellis' formulation, they were both the memorial to history, and its theater: providing a past that could be celebrated as well as critiqued.²²

The long history of Britain's earliest inhabitants allows us to view the process by which all history was interpreted, reconciled, and understood during this period. In the twelfth century, the invocation of Britain's Trojan origins began as part of a debate between Anglo-Norman historiographers about the use and abuse of power. As such, it borrowed themes from classical and late antique antecedents as well as contemporary political and social concerns. Even in the twelfth century, however, the story of Aeneas and his descendants had a history of its own, and a wide range of interpretations that could be, and were, exploited by Geoffrey of Monmouth and the historians who adapted his work. Because no history could, or can, offer one single meaning to its readers, it was necessary to integrate the story of Brutus and the Trojans with the method, and the content, of the histories that preceded it. Links to external details and events, whether competing historical traditions, chronologies, or the names of places, were sites where the history could be validated, but they also reflected external interests that could be brought back in.

In the century that followed, the audience for this history expanded, as did the number of overlapping contexts in which the stories it generated could be read. The introduction of Albina's prologue into Latin and vernacular histories should alert historians and scholars of literature alike that the distinctions between genres in the Middle Ages, though present, were not mutually exclusive. Albina's history became useful both for its antiquity and its critique of female misrule. Once incorporated into the historical narrative, those elements became difficult to jettison, and the efforts to preserve them in the face of

²² J. Bellis, *The Hundred Years' War in Literature 1337-1600* (Woodbridge: DS Brewer, 2016), 56.

changing definitions of historical accuracy is a testament to their versatility, rather than the credulity of their readers and the authors who drew from them.

The expansions of historical and literary materials found in fifteenth-century manuscripts, particularly in the Latin *Bruts*, also suggest the evolution of a process of historical reading and critique. The compilations that were constructed out of the Albina story, the *Historia Regum Britanniae*, and other works provided a model for understanding history (chronological alignment) that was transmitted through the Latin *Bruts* as well as their vernacular translations. These Latin histories did not formalize the narrative of England's past (and, for that matter, neither did the version of the printed *Chronicles of England*), but they do demonstrate how the wider awareness of multiple styles of reading history, or of multiple "competing" histories, produce hybrids of both style and content. By the sixteenth century, it was increasingly common to encounter Britain's early history within a chronological framework, and in connection with the lineages or histories of other peoples. I argue that this was less a process of Latinate or "scholarly" history intruding upon "popular" narrative than it was of the desire of all readers of history to understand and contextualize their reading. What began as references to place names, etymologically connected to familiar locations, expanded into a process whereby narrative (the history of the Britons) could be reconciled into larger schema of knowledge.

This process continued to raise questions and expose gaps in historical narrative. It caused compilers to look elsewhere for answers. It inspired new creations and shaped the continued translation of older material. Chief among those creations are the poems and genealogies incorporated into historical manuscripts and the transfer of historical details into vernacular romance, civic poetry, or the visual imagery of pageantry. Rather than policing the

boundaries between history, propaganda, and literature, we should view the continued invocation of legendary British kings as the result of a perpetual crossing of those boundaries, as successive generations looked to the past for argument, entertainment, and edification. Encountering the past, in books, performances, or the landscape was a commemorative process as well, in that the memory of past figures, places, or times was actively invoked in the mind of the participant.

Once learned, the history of Britain's early kings provided a shared cache of experiences that could be drawn upon. It continued to be learned, moreover, because of the centrality of these experiences to English identity. The compilations which survive from the period indicate the wide variety of settings in which the stories of Britain's early monarchs could be employed. Furthermore, the process of adding to, adapting, and annotating these books demonstrates how readers could bring their own interests and questions to bear on a shared narrative of the past. By the end of Elizabeth I's reign, references to the Britons were far more commonly encountered in works of imaginative literature, plays, and other public displays than they had been in the fifteenth century, and it was much less likely that a reader of history would approach them without that knowledge in mind. The willingness of authors like Spenser and Shakespeare to use the ancient Britons alongside the anecdotes of England's Saxon and Plantagenet kings, was, I argue, the direct result of the long history of interplay between these figures in history and in literature, one which chronicles were seminal in perpetuating.

As history, the story of Britain's early inhabitants could not be contained within a single text or linguistic tradition. While there was no one way to read the history of Britain's early inhabitants, the multitude of places in which the same past could be encountered

shaped the number of perceptions that could be formed about it. Like the legendary Britons, the history of all of Britain's kings lay latent in the imagination of her writers and readers, waiting to be called out of hiding when the need arose. When called up, the process of negotiation, critique, and assimilation that had made them history in the first place began anew. The long legacy of the Trojans in England's historical landscape clearly and convincingly illustrates how many different uses could be found for the past in the centuries before the *ars historica* became more clearly defined. As they recalled the stories of their country's origins, generations of writers and readers shaped their past and were, in turn, shaped by it.

Table 1

Britain's Early Kings in the *Brut*

The height of each bar corresponds roughly to the number of chapters or anecdotes the Brut devotes to each king, summarized below the block. The red blocks represent a failure in the line of kings.



Works Cited

I. Primary Sources

Manuscripts

Cambridge, MA.

Harvard University MS Eng. 530

Cambridge, UK.

Cambridge University Library MS E.e.4.32

Corpus Christi College Library MS 311

Trinity College Library MS O.2.21

Trinity College Library MS O.4.20

Trinity College Library MS R.7.13

London, UK. British Library

MS Additional 10099

MS Cotton Cleopatra D.VIII

MS Cotton Domitian A.IV

MS Cotton Galba E.VIII

MS Egerton 650

MS Harley 53

MS Harley 3906

MS Royal 13.A.VI

MS Royal 18.A.IX

MS Royal 18.B.III

MS Sloane 2027

London, UK. Lambeth Palace Library

MS 84

MS 99

MS 306

MS 491

MS 493

MS 504

Oxford, UK. Bodleian Library

MS Laud Misc. 733

MS Ashmole 791

MS Douce 290

MS Lyell 34

MS Rawlinson B.216

San Marino, CA. Huntington Library

MS EL 26 A 13

MS HM 114

MS HM 136

MS HM 19960

MS HM 26341

MS HM 28561

MS HM 31911

Printed Primary Sources

(individual copies, where applicable, indicated by shelfmark)

Anon. *The Anonymous Short Metrical Chronicle*. The National Library of Scotland. Online.
<http://auchinleck.nls.uk/mss/smc.html>. Last Accessed 3/20/2017.

———. *The Life of St. Ursula after the Chronicles of England*. Westminster: Wynkyn De Worde, 1509.

Babington, Churchill and J.R. Lumby ed. *Polychronicon Ranulphi Higden*. 9 vols. Rolls Series 41. London: Longman & Co., 1865-86.

Bale, John. *The Laboryouse Journey and Searche of John Lelande for England's Antiquities*. London, 1549.

———. *Illustrium maioris Britanniae scriptorum, hoc est, Angliae, Cambriae, ac Scotiae Summarium*. Ipswich, John Overton: 1548.

———. *Scriptorium illustrium maioris Britanniae quam nunc Angliam & Scotiam vocant catalogus*. 2 vols. Basel: Iohannis Operinus, 1557-59.

Oxford, UK. Christ Church Wb.4.8

Brereton, Georgine ed. *Des Grantz Geanz: an Anglo-Norman Poem*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1937.

Blake, Norman ed. *Caxton's Own Prose*. London: André Deutsch, 1973.

Burgess, Glynn S. *Two Medieval Outlaws: Eustace the Monk and Fouke Fitz Waryn*. Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 1997.

Cavellatus, Ivo ed. *Britanniae utriusque rerum et principum origo et gesta insignia*. Paris: Badius Ascensius, 1517.

Oxford, UK. Christ Church Wb.5 12

Childs, Wendy ed. and trans. *Vita Edwardi Secundi: The Life of Edward II*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2005.

Christiansen, Eric trans. *Dudo of Saint-Quentin: History of the Normans*. Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1998.

Chronicles of England. Westminster: William Caxton, 1480.

Johns Hopkins Univ. Library Garrett Incun 1480

London, UK. British Library IB 55026; 55027; 55028 (c.10.b.24); 55029

London, UK. Lambeth Palace Library ZZ.1480.2

Chronicles of England. Westminster: William Caxton, 1482

London, British Library IB 55062; 55063 (C.10.b.4)

Chronicles of England. St. Albans: s.n., c. 1486.

Chicago, IL. University of Chicago SCRC alc Incun 1483.C4

London, UK. British Library IB 55708 (C.11.b.1); IB. 55709.

San Marino, CA. Huntington Library 82875; 59595

Chronicles of England. London: William de Machlinia, c.1486.

London, UK. British Library IB 55463, Harl.5919/189, IA.55490 (2)

Manchester, UK. John Rylands Library 15397

Chronicles of England. Antwerp: Gerard Leeu, 1493.

London, UK. British Library G.5993 (IB 49860)

Chronicles of England. Westminster: Wynkyn de Worde, 1497.

London, UK. British Library IB 55205 (C.11.b.1), IB 55207 (G.5996)

Chronicles of England. London: Wynkin de Worde, 1502.

London, UK. British Library (G.5997)

Oxford, UK. Bodleian Library, (Auct QQ sup 29)

Chronicles of England. London: Julian Notary, 1504.

London, UK. British Library (G.5994)

Chronicles of England. London: Richard Pynson, 1510.

London, UK. British Library (C.55.H.9.(1.); C.55.h.9.(2.))

Chronicles of England. London: Julian Notary, 1515.

London, UK. British Library (C.21.d.11; G.5995)

Oxford, UK. St. John's College (HB4/6.d.4.13(2))

Chronicles of England. London: Wynkyn de Worde, 1515.

Chronicles of England. London: Wynkyn de Worde, 1520.

Chronicles of England. London: Wynkyn de Worde, 1528.

Dictys Cretensis (pseud.) *Ephemeridos Belli Trojani ex graeco in latinam sermonem versa atque redacta*. Brill, Library of Latin Texts – Series A. Online.
<http://clt.brepolis.net/llta/pages/Toc.aspx?ctx=945215>. Last Accessed 3/20/2017.

———. *Belli Troiani criptores Dictys Cretensis (de bello troiano q. Septimio Romano interprete.), Dares Phrygius (de excidio troiano historia, Cornelio nepote interprete.) & Homerus (iliados liber primus. XXIII.), omnes iampridem latio jure donati, nunc verò à mendis expurgati, et in unum volumen digesti*. Basel: Peter Perna, 1573.

London, UK. Royal College of Physicians Library D 139/7

Eckhardt, Claire ed. *Castleford's Chronicle or The Boke of Brut*. 2. Vols. EETS OS 305 & 306. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996.

Ellis, Henry ed. *The Chronicle of Iohn Hardyng*. London: 1812.

Leland, John. *Genethliacon illustrissimi Eäduerdi Principis Cambriae, Ducis Coriniae, et Comitiss Palatini libellus ante aliquot annos inchoatus, nunc uerò absolutus, & editus: Ioanne Lelando antiquario autore. Libellus candido lectori*. London: Reynerus Wolfe, 1543.

London, UK. British Library C 95 c 15

Oxford, UK. Christ Church W b.5 13

———. *Assertio inelytissimi Arthurii regis britanniae*. London: Reynerus Wolfe, 1544.

London, UK. British Library C 95 c 15

Oxford, UK. Christ Church W b.5 13

———. *Kykeion asma / Cygnea cantio*. London, Reynerus Wolfe, 1545.

London, UK. British Library C 95 c 15

Oxford, UK. Christ Church W b.5 13

———. *Enkomion tes eirenes / Laudatio pacis*. London, Reynerus Wolfe, 1546.

——— and Richard Robinson trans. *A learned and true assertion of the original, life, actes, and death of the most noble, valiant, and renoumed Prince Arthure, King of great Brittain*. London, John Wolfe, 1582.

Frazer, R.M. trans. *The Trojan War: the Chronicles of Dictys of Crete and Dares the Phrygian*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1966.

- Furnivall, Frederick ed. *Political, Religious, and Love Poems: Published From the Archbishop of Canterbury's Lambeth MS No. 306, and Other Sources*. EETS OS 15. London: Trubner, 1886. Revised ed. 1903.
- Gairdner, James ed. *Three Fifteenth-Century Chronicles with Historical Memoranda by John Stow*. London: Camden Society, 1880.
- Greene, David trans. *Herodotus: The History*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987.
- Lindsay, Wallace ed and trans. *Isidori Hispalensis episcopi etymologiarum sive originum libri XX*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1911.
- Mandeville, John. *The Book of John Mandeville*, edited by Tamarah Kohanski and C. David Benson. TEAMS Middle English Texts. (Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute Publications, 2007). Online. Available at <http://d.lib.rochester.edu/teams/publication/kohanski-and-benson-the-book-of-john-mandeville>. Last Accessed 3/21/2017.
- Marvin, Julia ed. *The Oldest Anglo-Norman Prose Brut Chronicle: An Edition and Translation*. *Medieval Chronicles* 4. Oxford: Boydell Press, 2006.
- Meister, Ferdinandus ed. *Dareti Phrygii de excidio Troiae historia*. Leipzig: B.G Teubner, 1874.
- Pagan, Heather ed. *Prose Brut to 1332*. Manchester, UK: Anglo-Norman Text Society, 2011.
- Powell, David ed. *Ludovicus Virinius Viri Doctissimi Britannicae Historiae Libri Sex*. London: Henry Denham and R. Newberry, 1585.
- [Public Record Office] *A Calendar of Close Rolls Preserved in the Public Record Office: Edward III 1227-1330*. London: 1896.
- Robinson, Richard. *The Ancient Order, Society, and Unitie Laudable of Prince Arthur, and his Knightly Armory of the Round Table*. London: John Wolfe, 1583.
- Rolevinck, Werner. *Fasciculus Temporum*. Cologne: Heinrich Quentell, 1479.
- Simpson, James and Sarah Peverly ed. *John Hardyng, Chronicle*. Kalamazoo MI: Medieval Institute Publications, 2015.
- Stones, Edward ed. and trans. *Anglo-Scottish Relations 1174-1328: Some Selected Documents*. London: Clarendon Press, 1965.
- Stow, John. *A Survey of London Written in the Year 1598 by John Stow*, edited by Henry Morley. Stroud, Gloucs.: Alan Sutton, 1994).

- . *A Summarie of Englyshe Chronicles Conteyning the True Account of the Yeres*. London: Thomas Marsh, 1565.
- . *A Chronicle of England from Brute vnto this Present Year of Christ 1580*. London: Henry Bynneman for Ralph Newbery, 1580.
- Van Houts, Elizabeth ed. and trans. *The Gesta Normannorum Ducum of William of Jumièges, Orderic Vitalis, and Robert of Torigni*. 2 vols. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992 and 1995.
- Vergil, Polydore. *Anglica Historia*, edited and translated by Dana Sutton. Online. <http://www.philological.bham.ac.uk/polverg/contents.html>. Last Accessed 3/20/2017.
- Virgil. *Aeneid*. Edited by J. Henderson and translated by H.R. Fairclough. *Loeb Classical Library* 63. Revised ed. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999.
- Walsingham, Thomas. *Ypodigma Neustriae vel Normanniae: per Thomam de Walsingham: ab irruptione Normannorum usque ad annum. 6. regni Henrici quinti*. London: John Day, 1574.
- London, UK. Royal College of Physicians Library D1/17-c-11
- Weiss, Judith. *Wace's 'Roman de Brut': A History of the British*. Revised ed. Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2002.

II. Secondary Sources

- Ainsworth, Peter. "Legendary History: *Historia* and *Fabula*." in Deborah M. Deliyannis ed. *Historiography in the Middle Ages*. Leiden: Brill, 2002. 387-416.
- Albu, Emily. "Dudo of Saint-Quentin: The Heroic Past Imagined." *The Haskins Society Journal* 6 (1994): 111-118.
- . *The Normans in Their Histories: Propaganda, Myth, and Subversion*. Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2001.
- Anglo, Sidney. *Images of Tudor Kingship*. London: Seaby, 1992.
- Armitage, David. *The Ideological Origins of the British Empire*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.
- Ashe, Laura. *Fiction and History in England, 1066-1200*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.

- . “William Marshall, Lancelot, and Arthur: Chivalry and Kingship.” *Anglo-Norman Studies* 30 (2007): 19-40.
- Bakhtin, Mikhail. “Epic and Novel.” In *The Dialogic Imagination*, edited by M. Holquist, 3-40. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1981.
- Bale, Anthony. “Late Medieval Book Owners named John Leche.” *Bodleian Library Record* 25 (2012): 105-112.
- . “Belligerent Literacy, Bookplates and Graffiti: Dorothy Helbarton's Book.” In *Book Destruction from the Medieval to the Contemporary*, edited by G. Partington and A. Smyth, 89-111. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014.
- Baswell, Christopher. *Virgil in Medieval England: Figuring the Aeneid from the Twelfth Century to Chaucer*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995.
- Beaune, Collette. “The Political Uses of the Trojan Myth.” In *The Birth of an Ideology: Myths and Symbols of Nation in Late-Medieval France*, edited by F. Cheyette and translated by S. Huston, 226-244. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1991.
- Bellis, Joanna. *The Hundred Years' War in Literature, 1337-1600*. Cambridge: DS Brewer, 2016.
- Bennet, Matthew. “Poetry as History? The Roman de Rou of Wace as a Source for the Norman Conquest.” *Anglo-Norman Studies* (1983): 21-39.
- Bernau, Anke. “Beginning with Albina: Remembering the Nation.” *Exemplaria* 21 (2009): 247-73.
- Blacker, Jean. ““Ne vuil sun livre translater”: Wace's Omission of Merlin's Prophecies from the Roman de Brut.” In *Anglo-Norman Anniversary Essays*, edited by I. Short, 49-59. London: Anglo-Norman Text Society, 1993.
- . *The Faces of Time: Portrayal of the Past in Old French and Latin Historical Narrative of the Anglo-Norman Regnum*. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1994.
- . “Where Wace Feared to Tread: Latin Commentaries on Merlin's Prophecies in the Reign of Henry II.” *Arthuriana* 6 (1996): 36-52.
- Blair, Anne. *Too Much to Know: Managing Scholarly Information before the Modern Age*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2011.
- Blumenfeld-Kosinski, Renate, Luise von Flotow, and Daniel Russel ed. *The Politics of Translation in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*. Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 2001.
- Boffey, Julia. ““Many grete myraclys... in divers contreys of the eest’: the Reading and Circulation of the Middle English Prose ‘Three Kings of Cologne’.” In *Medieval*

- Women: Texts and Contexts in Late Medieval Britain, Essays for Felicity Riddy*, edited by J. Wogan-Browne, R. Voaden, A. Diamond, A.M. Hutchison, C. Meale, and L. Johnson, 35-47. Turnhout: Brepols, 2000.
- . *Manuscript and Print in London, c.1475-1530*. London: British Library, 2012.
- and John Thompson. "Anthologies and Miscellanies: Production and Choice of Texts." In *Book Production and Publishing in Britain 1375-1475*, edited by J. Griffiths and D. Pearsall, 279-316. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 1989.
- Bouet, Pierre. "De L'Origine Troyenne des Normands." *Annales de Normandie* 25 (1992): 402-411.
- Brackman, Rebecca. *The Elizabethan Invention of Anglo-Saxon England: Lawrence Nowell, William Lambarde, and the Study of Old English*. Cambridge: DS Brewer, 2012.
- Bryan, Elizabeth J. "Matthew Parker and the Middle English Prose Brut." In *The Prose Brut and Other Late Medieval Chronicles: Books Have Their Histories*, edited by J. Rajsic, E. Kooper, and D. Hoche, 165-81. Woodbridge: York Medieval Press, 2016.
- Buttry, Dolores. "Authority Refracted: Personal Principle and Translation in Wace's *Roman de Brut*." In *The Politics of Translation in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*, edited by R. Blumenfeld-Kosinski, L. von Flotow, and D. Russel, 85-106. Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 2001.
- Carley, James ed. *Glastonbury Abbey and the Arthurian Tradition*. Woodbridge: DS Brewer, 2001.
- and Julia Crick. "Constructing Albion's Past." In *Glastonbury Abbey and the Arthurian Tradition*, edited by J. Carley, 347-418. Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 2001.
- Carlson, David. *English Humanist Books: Writers and Patrons, Manuscript and Print, 1485-1525*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993.
- Carpenter, Christine. *The Wars of the Roses: Politics and the Constitution of England c.1437-1509*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.
- Carpenter, David. *The Struggle for Mastery: Britain 1066-1284*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003.
- Carruthers, Mary. *The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture*. 2nd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008.
- Chartier, Roger. *The Order of Books: Readers, Authors, and Libraries in Europe between the Fourteenth and Eighteenth Centuries*. Stanford, CA: Stanford Universtiy Press, 1994.
- . "The Practical Impact of Writing." In *The Book History Reader*, 118-142

- Chartier, Roger, and David N. Cavallo. *A History of Reading in the West*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 1999.
- Clark, Frederic. "Reading the 'First Pagan Historiographer,' Dares Phrygius and Medieval Genealogy." *Viator* 41.2 (2010): 203-26.
- . "Authenticity, Antiquity, and Authority: Dares Phrygius in Early Modern Europe." *Journal of the History of Ideas* 72 (2011): 183-207.
- Clark, James, F. Coulson, and K. McKinley ed. *Ovid in the Middle Ages*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011.
- Clark, James C. *The Dance of Death in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*. Glasgow: Jackson & Son, 1950.
- Clark, John. "Trinovantum - the Evolution of a Legend." *The Journal of Medieval History* 7 (1981): 135-152.
- Classen, Albrecht. "Werner Rolevinck's *Fasciculus Temporum*: The History of a Late Medieval Best-Seller or: The First Hypertext." *Gutenberg Jarbuch* 81 (2006): 225-30.
- Copeland, Rita. *Rhetoric, Hermeneutics, and Translation in the Middle Ages: Academic Traditions and Vernacular Texts*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991.
- Connolly, Margaret. *John Shirley: Book Production and the Noble Household in Fifteenth-Century England*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998.
- Crane, Susan. *Insular Romance: Politics, Faith, and Culture in Anglo-Norman and Middle English Literature*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1986.
- Crick, Julia. *The Historia Regum Britanniae of Geoffrey of Monmouth, vol. 3: A Summary Catalogue of the Manuscripts*. Woodbridge: Boydell, 1989.
- . *The Historia Regum Britanniae of Geoffrey of Monmouth, vol. 4: Dissemination and Reception in the Later Middle Ages*. Cambridge, D.S. Brewer, 1991.
- Cohen, Jeffrey. *Of Giants: Sex, Monsters, and the Middle Ages*. Medieval Cultures 17. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1999.
- Crouch, David. *The Reign of King Stephen 1135-1154*. Edinburgh: Pearson, 2000.
- Curley, Michael. "The Cloak of Anonymity and the Prophecy of John of Bridlington." *Modern Philology* 77 (1980): 361-9.
- . *Geoffrey of Monmouth*. New York: Twayne, 1994.

- Dagenais, John. *The Ethics of Reading in Manuscript Culture: Glossing the Libro de Buen Amor*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994.
- Damian-Grint, Peter. *The New Historians of the Twelfth-Century Renaissance*. Cambridge: Boydell Press, 1999.
- Darnton, Robert. "What is the History of Books?" In *The Book History Reader*, edited by D. Finkelstein and A. McCleary, 8-26. 2nd ed. London and New York: Routledge, 2006.
- . "What is the History of Books? Revisited." *Modern Intellectual History* 4 (2007): 495-508.
- de Certeau, Michel. *On the Writing of History*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1988.
- Dean, Ruth. *Anglo-Norman Literature: A Guide to Texts and Manuscripts*. London: Anglo-Norman Text Society, 1999.
- Desmet, Christy. "Afterlives of the *Prose Brut* in Early Modern Chronicles and Literature." *Trivium* 36 (2006): 227-46.
- Drukker, Tamar. "Thirty-Three Murderous Sisters: A Pre-Trojan Foundation Myth in the Middle English *Prose Brut* Chronicle." *The Review of English Studies*, N.S. 54 (2003): 445-63.
- . "I Read Therefore I Write: Readers' Marginalia in Some Middle English *Prose Brut* Manuscripts." *Trivium* 36 (2006): 97-130.
- Doyle, Ian. "More Light on John Shirley." *Medium Aevum* 30 (1967): 93-101.
- Dunphy, Graeme. *The Encyclopedia of the Medieval Chronicle*. 2 vols. Leiden: Brill, 2010.
- Dutschke, Consuelo. *Guide to Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts in the Huntington Library*. 2 vols. San Marino, CA: Huntington Library, 1989.
- Echard, Sian. "Containing the Book: The Institutional Afterlives of Medieval Manuscripts." In *The Medieval Manuscript Book: Cultural Approaches*, edited by M. Johnston and M. Van Dussen, 96-118. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015.
- Eckhardt, Caroline. "The Manuscript of *Castleford's Chronicle: Its History and Scribes*." In *The Prose Brut and Other Late Medieval Chronicles: Books Have Their Histories*, edited by J. Rajsic, E. Kooper, and D. Hoche, 199-218. Woodbridge: York Medieval Press, 2016.
- Edwards, A. S. G. "The Influence and Audience of the *Polychronicon*: Some Observations." *Proceedings of the Leeds Philosophical and Literary Society* 17 (1980): 113-19.
- ed. *Middle English Prose: A Critical Guide to Major Authors and Genres*. Rutgers, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1984.

- Evans, Ruth. "Gigantic Origins: An Annotated Translation of *De Origine Gigantum*." In *Glastonbury Abbey and the Arthurian Tradition*, edited by J. Carley, 419-434. Woodbridge: Boydell, 2001.
- Evenden, Elizabeth and Thomas Freeman. *Religion and the Book in Early Modern England: The Making of Foxe's Book of Martyrs*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011.
- Federico, Sylvia. *New Troy: Fantasies of Empire in the Late Middle Ages*. Medieval Cultures 36. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2003.
- Ferguson, Arthur. *The Chivalric Tradition in Renaissance England*. Washington, DC: Folger Shakespeare Library, 1986.
- . *Clio Unbound: Perception of the Social and Cultural Past in Renaissance England*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1979.
- Freeman, Arthur. *Bibliotheca Fictiva: A Collection of Books and Manuscripts Relating to Literary Forgery: 400BC - 2000AD*. London: Bernard Quaritch, 2014.
- Field, Rosalind. "Romance as History, History as Romance." In *Romance in Medieval England*, edited by M. Mills, J. Fellows, and C. Meale, 163-73. Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 1991.
- Fisher, Matthew. *Scribal Authorship and the Writing of History in Medieval England*. Columbus, OH: Ohio State University Press, 2012.
- Fleischman, Suzanne. "On the Representation of History and Fiction in the Middle Ages." *History and Theory* 22 (1983): 278-310.
- Gadd, Ian and Alexandra Gillespie ed. *John Stow (1525-1605) and the Making of the English Past*. London: British Library, 2004.
- Gaskill, Malcolm. *Crime and Mentalities in Early Modern England*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.
- Geary, Patrick. *Phantoms of Remembrance: Memory and Oblivion at the end of the First Millennium*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994.
- Gillespie, Alexandra. "Poets, Printers, and Early English *Sammelbände*." *Huntington Library Quarterly* 67 (2004): 189-214.
- . *Print Culture and the Medieval Author: Chaucer, Lydgate, and their Books 1473-1557*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006.
- . "Followynge the Trace of Mayster Caxton: Some Histories of Fifteenth-Century Printed Books." In *Caxton's Trace: Studies in the History of English Printing*, edited by W. Kuskin, 167-95. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2006.

- Gillingham, John. "The Context and Purposes of Geoffrey of Monmouth's 'History of the Kings of Britain'." *Anglo-Norman Studies* 13 (1990): 99-118.
- Given-Wilson, Christopher. *Chronicles: The Writing of History in Medieval England*. London: Hambledon, 2004.
- . *Henry IV*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2016.
- Goldstein, Roy James. *The Matter of Scotland: Historical Narrative in Medieval Scotland*. Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1993.
- Grafton, Anthony. *Commerce with the Classics: Ancient Books and Renaissance Readers*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1997.
- . *What Was History? The Art of History in Early Modern Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.
- . "Matthew Parker: The Book as Archive." *History of Humanities* 2 (2017): 17-50.
- and Ann Blair. *The Transmission of Culture in Early Modern Europe*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1990.
- and Lisa Jardine. "Studied for Action: How Gabriel Harvey Read His Livy." *Past & Present* 129 (1990): 30-78.
- Gransden, Antonia. *Historical Writing in England, vol. I: c.550-c.1307*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1978.
- . *Historical Writing in England, vol. II: c.1307 to the Early Sixteenth Century*. London: Routledge, 1982.
- . *Legends, Traditions, and History in Medieval England*. London: Hambledon Press, 1993.
- Graves, Michael A.R. *Burghley: William Cecil, Lord Burghley*. London: Longman, 1998.
- Griffiths, Jeremy and Derek Pearsall eds. *Book Production and Publishing in Britain 1375-1475*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.
- Hackel, Heidi. *Reading Material in Early Modern England: Print, Gender, and Literacy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.
- Hammer, Jacob. "The Poetry of Johannes Beverus with Extracts from his *Tractatus de Bruto Abbreviato*." *Modern Philology* 34 (1936-37): 119-32.
- Hanna, Ralph. *Pursuing History: Middle English Manuscripts and their Texts*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1996.

- Hanning, Robert. *The Vision of History in Early Britain: from Gildas to Geoffrey of Monmouth*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1966.
- Haskins, Charles. *The Renaissance of the Twelfth Century*. 2nd ed. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1971.
- Hiatt, Alfred. "Historical Writing." In *A Companion to Middle English Prose*, edited by A.S.G. Edwards, 175-94. Rochester, NY: DS Brewer, 2004.
- . "John Stow, Citizen and Historian." In *John Stow (1525-1605) and the Making of the English Past*, edited by I. Gadd and A. Gillespie, 13-28. London: British Library, 2004.
- Hay, Denys. *Polydore Vergil: Renaissance Historian and Man of Letters*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1952.
- Hellinga, Lotte. *William Caxton and Early Printing in England*. London: British Library, 2010.
- and George Painter ed. *A Catalogue of Books Printed in the XV Century now in the British Library, pt. XI - England*. t'Goy Houten: Hes & De Graaf, 2007.
- Helmerichs, Robert. "'Ad Tutandos Patriae Fines': The Defense of Normandy, 1135." In *The Normans and their Adversaries at War: Essays in Memory of Warren C. Hollister*, edited by R. Abels and B. Bachrach, 129-148. Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2001.
- Hiatt, Alfred. *The Making of Medieval Forgeries: False Documents in Fifteenth-Century England*. London: British Library, 2004.
- Hunt, William. "Civic Chivalry and the English Civil War." In *The Transmission of Culture in Early Modern Europe*, edited by A. Grafton and A. Blair, 204-37. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1990.
- Hollister, C. Warren. *Anglo-Norman Political Culture in the Twelfth-Century Renaissance*. Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1997.
- Ingladew, Francis. "The Book of Troy and the Genealogical Construction of History: The Case of Geoffrey of Monmouth's 'Historia Regum Britanniae'." *Speculum* 69 (1994): 665-704.
- James, Montague. *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Manuscripts in Lambeth Palace Library: The Mediaeval Manuscripts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1932
- Johns, Adrian. *The Nature of the Book: Print Culture and Knowledge in the Making*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1998.
- Johnson, Lesley. "Return to Albion." *Arthurian Literature* XIII (1996): 19-40.

- Johnson, Michael and Michael Van Dussen ed. *The Medieval Manuscript Book: Cultural Approaches*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015.
- Kendrick, Thomas. *British Antiquity*. London: Meuthen, 1950.
- Kingsford, Charles L. *English Historical Literature in the Fifteenth Century*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1913.
- Kipling, Gordon. *Enter the King: Theater, Liturgy, and Ritual in the Medieval Civic Triumph*. Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1998.
- Kerby-Fulton, Kathryn and John Thompson ed. *New Directions in Manuscript Studies and Reading Practices: Studies in Honor of Derek Pearsall*. South Bend, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2014.
- Kelley, Donald, and David Sacks. *The Historical Imagination in Early Modern Britain: History, Rhetoric, and Fiction 1500-1800*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.
- Kennedy, Edward ed. *A Manual of the Writings in Middle English, vol. VIII : Chronicles and Other Historical Writing*. New Haven, CT: 1990.
- . “History Repeats Itself: The Dartmouth *Brut* and Fifteenth-Century Historiography.” *Digital Philology* 3 (2014): 196-214.
- Kewes, Paulina. *The Uses of History in Early Modern England*. San Marino, CA: Huntington Library Press, 2006.
- Knight, Jeffrey. *Bound to Read: Compilations, Collections, and the Making of Renaissance Literature*. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013.
- . “Organizing Manuscript and Print: from *Compilatio* to Compilation.” In *The Medieval Manuscript Book*, edited by M. Johnston and M. Van Dussen, 77-95. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015.
- Kooper, Erik. “Longleat House MS 55: an Unacknowledged *Brut* Manuscript?” In *The Prose Brut and Other Late Medieval Chronicles: Books Have Their Histories*, edited by J. Rajsic, D. Hoche, and E. Kooper, 75-93. Woodbridge: York Medieval Press, 2016.
- Kuskin, William ed. *Caxton’s Trace: Studies in the History of English Printing*. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2006.
- . *Recursive Origins: Writing at the Transition to Modernity*. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2013.
- de Laborderie, Olivier. “A New Pattern for English History: the First Genealogical Rolls of the Kings of England.” In *Broken Lines: Genealogical Literature in Late-Medieval Britain*

- and France*, edited by R. Radulescu and E. D. Kennedy, 45-62. Turnhout: Brepols 2008.
- Latour, Bruno. *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network Theory*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.
- Lawrence, Anne. "Anglo-Norman Book Production." In *England and Normandy in the Middle Ages*, 79-93. London: The Hambledon Press, 1994.
- Leckie, R. William. *The Passage of Dominion: Geoffrey of Monmouth and the Periodization of Insular History in the Twelfth Century*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1981.
- Le Saux, Françoise H M. *A Companion to Wace*. Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 2005.
- . *Layamon's Brut: The Poem and its Sources*. Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 1989.
- . "The Reception of the Matter of Britain in Thirteenth Century England: A Study of Some Anglo-Norman Manuscripts of Wace's 'Roman de Brut'." In *Thirteenth Century England X: Proceedings of the Durham Conference 2003*, edited by M. Prestwich, R. Britnell, and R. Frame, 131-145. Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2005.
- Levine, Joseph. *Humanism and History: Origins of Modern English Historiography*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1987.
- Loomis, Roger. "Edward I: Arthurian Enthusiast." *Speculum* 28 (1953): 114-27.
- Love, Harold. *The Culture and Commerce of Texts: Scribal Publication in Seventeenth-Century England*. Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 1998.
- Luxford, Julian. "A Previously Unlisted Manuscript of the Latin Brut Chronicle with Sherbourne Continuation," *Medium Aevum* 71.2 (2002): 286-93.
- Martens, Johan. "The *Fasciculus Temporum* of 1474: On Form and Content of the Incumbable." *Quaerendo* 22 (1992) 197-204.
- Marvin, Julia. "Albine and Isabelle: Regicidal Queens and the Historical Imagination of the Anglo-Norman Prose Brut Chronicles." *Arthurian Literature* 18 (2001): 143-192.
- . "Sources and Analogues for the Middle English Prose Brut: New Findings." *Trivium* 36 (2006): 1-31.
- . "Narrative, Lineage, and Succession in the Anglo-Norman Prose Brut Chronicle." In *Broken Lines: Genealogical Literature in Late Medieval Britain and France*, edited by E. D. Kennedy and R. Radulescu, 205-220. Turnhout: Brepols, 2008.

- . “The Vitality of Anglo-Norman in Late Medieval England: the Case of the Prose Brut Chronicle.” In *Language and Culture in Medieval Britain*, edited by J. Wogan-Browne, 303-19. York, UK: York Medieval Press, 2009.
- . “Latinity and Vernacularity in the Tradition of Geoffrey of Monmouth: Text, Apparatus, and Readership.” *The Medieval Chronicle* VIII (2013): 1-41.
- Marx, William. “Reception and Revision in the Middle English Prose *Brut*.” *Trivium* 36 (2006): 53-69.
- . “Peculiar Versions of the Prose *Brut* and Textual Archaeology.” In *The Prose Brut and Other Late Medieval Chronicles: Books Have Their Histories*, edited by J. Rajsic, E. Kooper, and D. Hoche, 94-104. Woodbridge: York Medieval Press, 2015.
- Matheson, Lister. “Printer and Scribe: Caxton, the *Polychronicon*, and the *Brut*.” *Speculum* 60 (1985): 593-614.
- . *The Prose Brut: The Development of a Middle English Chronicle*. Tempe, AZ: Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies, 1998.
- . “National and Civic Chronicles in Late Fifteenth-Century London.” In *The Yorkist Age: Proceedings of the 2011 Harlaxton Symposium*, edited by C. Steer and H. Kleineke, 256-74. Donington, Lincs.: Paul Watkins Publishing, 2013.
- and Linne Mooney. “The Beryn Scribe and His Texts: Evidence for Multiple-Copy Production of Manuscripts in Fifteenth-Century England.” *The Library, 7th Series*, 4 (2003): 347-70.
- Meale, Carol. “Patrons, Buyers, and Owners: Book Production and Social Status.” In *Book Production and Publishing in Britain 1375-1475*, edited by J. Griffiths and D. Pearsall, 201-38. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.
- Merkle, Stefan. “The Truth and Nothing but the Truth: Dictys and Dares.” In *The Novel in the Ancient World*, edited by G. Schmeling, 563-80. Leiden: Brill, 1996.
- McKisack, May. *Medieval History in the Tudor Age*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971.
- McKitterick, David. *Print, Manuscript, and the Search for Order 1450-1850*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.
- McLaren, Mary. *The London Chronicles of the Fifteenth Century: A Revolution in English Writing*. Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 2002.
- Morse, Ruth. *Truth and Convention in the Middle Ages: Rhetoric, Representation, and Reality*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991.

- Mortensen, Lars Boje. "The Texts and Contexts of Ancient Roman History in Twelfth-Century Western Scholarship." In *The Perception of the Past in Twelfth-Century Europe*, edited by P. Magdalino, 99-116. London: Hambledon Press, 1991.
- Mooney, Linne R. and Estelle Stubbs. *Scribes and the City: London Guildhall Clerks and the Dissemination of Middle English Literature 1375-1425*. Woodbridge: York Medieval Press, 2013.
- Müller, Martin. "Assemblages and Actor-networks: Rethinking Socio-material Power, Politics and Space." *Geography Compass* 9 (2015): 27-41.
- Munby, Julian, Richard Barber and Richard Brown. *Edward III's Round Table at Windsor: the House of the Round Table and the Windsor Festival of 1344*. Woodbridge: Boydell, 2007.
- Noble, James. "Patronage, Politics, and the Figure of Arthur in Geoffrey of Monmouth, Wace, and Layamon." In *Arthurian Yearbook II*, edited by K. Busby, 159-178. New York: Garland, 1992.
- Nolan, Maura. *John Lydgate and the Making of Public Culture*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.
- Ong, Walter. "Orality and Literacy: Writing Restructures Consciousness." In *The Book History Reader*, edited by D. Finkelstein and A. McCleary, 105-17. 2nd ed. London and New York: Routledge, 2006.
- Otter, Monika. "Functions of Fiction in Historical Writing." In *Writing Medieval History*, edited by N. Partner, 109-130. London: Hodder Arnold, 2005.
- Page, Raymond. *Matthew Parker and His Books*. Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute Publications, 1993.
- Patterson, Annabel. *Reading Holinsbed's Chronicles*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994.
- . "The Power of Anecdote in Tudor Historiography." In *The Historical Imagination in Early Modern Britain: History, Rhetoric and Fiction 1500-1800*, edited by D. Kelley and P. Sacks, 159-178. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.
- Parkes, Malcolm. *Scribes, Scripts, and Readers: Studies in the Communication, Presentation and Dissemination of Medieval Texts*. London: Hambledon Press, 1991.
- . *Their Hands Before Our Eyes: A Closer Look at Scribes*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008.
- Partner, Nancy. *Serious Entertainments: The Writing of History in Twelfth-Century England*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977.
- Partridge, Stephen. "The Legacy of John Shirley: Revisiting Houghton MS Eng 530." In *New Directions in Manuscript Studies and Reading Practices: Studies in Honor of Derek Pearsall*,

edited by Kathryn Kerby-Fulton and John Thompson, 425-45. South Bend, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2014.

Pearsall, Derek. *John Lydgate*. London: Routledge, 1970.

———. “The Whole Book: Late Medieval Manuscript Miscellanies and their Modern Interpreters.” In *Imagining the Book*, edited by S. Kelly and J. Thompson, 17-29. Turnhout: Brepols, 2005.

Petrina, Alexandra. *Cultural Politics in Fifteenth-Century England: The Case of Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester*. Leiden: Brill, 2008.

Pettegree, Andrew. *The Book in the Renaissance*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2010.

Pohl, Benjamin. *Dudo of Saint-Quentin's Historia Normannorum: Tradition, Innovation, and Memory*. Woodbridge: York Medieval Press, 2015.

Popper, Nicholas. *Walter Raleigh's History of the World and the Historical Culture of the Late Renaissance*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012.

Potts, Cassandra. “Atque Unum ad Diversis Gentibus Populum Effecit: Historical Tradition and the Norman Identity.” *Anglo-Norman Studies* 18 (1995): 139-152.

Prestwich, Michael. *Edward I*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1988.

Rajšić, Jaclyn, Erik Kooper and Dominique Hoche, ed. *The Prose Brut and Other Late Medieval Chronicles: Books Have Their Histories, Essays in Memory of Lister M. Matheson*. Woodbridge: York Medieval Press, 2016.

———. “The English Prose *Brut* Chronicle on a Roll: Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 546 and its History.” In *The Prose Brut and Other Late Medieval Chronicles: Books Have Their Histories*, edited by J. Rajšić, E. Kooper, and D. Hoche, 125-46. Woodbridge: York Medieval Press, 2016.

Raymond, Joad. *The Oxford History of Popular Print Culture, vol. I: Cheap Print in Britain and Ireland to 1660*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.

Radulescu, Raluca. “Gentry Readers of the *Brut* and Genealogical Material.” *Trivium* 36 (2006): 189-202.

———. and E. D. Kennedy, ed. *Broken Lines: Genealogical Literature in Late-Medieval Britain and France*. Turnhout: Brepols, 2008.

Reinhold, Meyer. “The Unhero Aeneas.” *Classica et Mediaevalia* 27 (1966): 195-207.

Reynolds, Susan. “Medieval ‘Origines Gentium’ and the Community of the Realm.” *History* 68 (1983): 275-290.

- Rollo, David, and Laura Ashe. *Historical Fabrication, Ethnic Fable and French Romance in Twelfth-Century England*. Lexington, KY: French Forum Publishers, 1998.
- Rouse, Richard and Mary Rouse. *Authentic Witnesses: Approaches to Medieval Texts and Manuscripts*. South Bend, IN: Notre Dame University Press, 1991.
- Ruch, Lisa. *Albina and Her Sisters: The Foundation of Albion*. Amherst, NY: Cambria Press, 2013.
- Ruddick, Andrea. *English Identity and Political Culture in the Fourteenth Century*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013.
- Rundle, David. "The Unoriginality of 'Tito Livio Frulovisi's *Vita Henrici Quinti*.'" *English Historical Review* 123 (2008): 1109-31.
- Salmon, John. "Precept, Example, and Truth: Diggory Wheare and the *ars historica*." In *The Historical Imagination in Early Modern Britain: History, Rhetoric, and Fiction 1500-1800*, edited by D. Kelley and D. Sacks, 11-36. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.
- Scherb, Victor. "Assimilating Giants: The Appropriation of Gog and Magog in Medieval and Early Modern England." *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 32 (2002): 59-84.
- Scheifle, Eleanor. "Richard II and the Visual Arts." In *Richard II: The Art of Kingship*, edited by A. Goodman and J. Gillespie, 255-72. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999.
- Searle, Eleanor. "Fact and Pattern in Heroic History: Dudo of St. Quentin." *Viator* 15 (1984): 119-37.
- Sharpe, Kevin. *Selling the Tudor Monarchy: Authority and Image in Sixteenth-Century England*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009.
- Sherman, William. *John Dee: The Politics of Reading and Writing in the English Renaissance*. Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 1995.
- . *Used Books: Marking Readers in Renaissance England*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008.
- Shopkow, Leah. *History and Community: Norman Historical Writing in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries*. Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1997.
- Short, Ian. "'Tam Angli quam Franci': Self-Definition in Anglo-Norman England." *Anglo-Norman Studies* 18 (1995): 153-75.
- . "Language and Literature." In *A Companion to the Anglo-Norman World*, edited by C. Harper-Bill and E. Van Houts, 191-213. Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2003.

- . “Patrons and Polyglots: French Literature in Twelfth-Century England.” *Anglo-Norman Studies* 14 (1991): 229-49.
- Smallwood, T.M. “The Prophecy of the Six Kings.” *Speculum* 60 (1985): 571-92.
- Smith, Margaret. “The Design Relationship between the Manuscript and the Incunable.” In *A Millennium of the Book: Production, Design, and Illustration in Manuscript and Print 900-1900*, edited by R. Myers and M. Harris, 23-44. New Castle, DE: Oak Knoll Press, 1994.
- Simpson, James. “The Other Book of Troy: Guido delle Colonne’s *Historia destructionis Troiae* in Fourteenth- and Fifteenth-Century England.” *Speculum* 73 (1998): 397-423.
- Southern, Richard. “Aspects of the European Tradition of Historical Writing.” In *History and Historians: Collected Papers of R. W. Southern*, edited by R. Bartlett, 11-83. Oxford: Blackwell, 2004.
- Spence, John. *Imagining History in Anglo-Norman Prose Chronicles*. York: York Medieval Press, 2013.
- Spiegel, Gabrielle. “History, Historicism, and the Social Logic of the Text in the Middle Ages.” *Speculum* 65 (1990): 59-86.
- . *Romancing the Past: The Rise of Vernacular Prose Historiography in Thirteenth-Century France*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1993.
- Sponsler, Claire. *The Queen’s Dumbshows: John Lydgate and the Making of Early Theater*. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014.
- Stanley, George ed. *A Biographical and Critical Dictionary of Painters and Engravers*. London: 1849.
- Stein, Robert. “Literary Criticism and the Evidence for History.” In *Writing Medieval History*, edited by N. Partner, 67-87. London: Hodder Arnold, 2005.
- . *Reality Fictions: Romance, History, and Governmental Authority, 1025-1180*. South Bend, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2006.
- Stephens, Walter. *Giants in Those Days: Folklore, Ancient History, and Nationalism*. Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1989.
- . “When Pope Noah Ruled the Etruscans: Annius of Viterbo and His Forged *Antiquities*.” *MLN* 119 Supplement (2004) S201-23.
- Stillwell, Margaret. “The *Fasciculus Temporum*: A Genealogical Survey of Editions before 1480.” In *Bibliographical Essays: A Tribute to Wilberforce Eames*, edited by G. Winship, 409-40. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1924.

- Stock, Brian. *Listening for the Text: On the Uses of the Past*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990.
- Strohm, Paul. *England's Empty Throne: Usurpation and the Language of Legitimation, 1399-1422*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1998.
- Summerfield, Thea. *The Matter of Kings' Lives: The Design of Past and Present in the Early Fourteenth-Century Verse Chronicles by Pierre de Langtoft and Robert Mannyng*. Amsterdam and Atlanta: Rodopi, 1998.
- Takagi, Masako and Toshiyuki Takamiya. "Caxton Edits the Roman War Episode: The *Chronicles of England* and Caxton's Book V." In *The Malory Debate: Essays on the Texts of le Morte Darthur*, edited by R. Kindrick and M. Salda, 169-191. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.
- Tatlock, John. *The Legendary History of Britain: Geoffrey of Monmouth's Historia Regum Britanniae and its Early Vernacular Versions*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1950.
- Taylor, James. *English Historical Literature in the Fourteenth Century*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987.
- Thompson, John. "The Middle English Prose *Brut* and the Possibilities of Cultural Mapping." In *Design and Distribution of Late Medieval Manuscripts*, edited by M. Connolly and L. Mooney, 245-60. York: York Medieval Press, 2008.
- Tonry, Kathleen. "Reading History in Caxton's *Polychronicon*." *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 111/2 (2011): 169-198.
- Tyler, Elizabeth. "Trojans in Anglo-Saxon England: Precedent Without Descent." *Review of English Studies* 64 (2013): 1-20.
- Urbansky, Charity. *Writing History for the King: Henry II and the Politics of Vernacular Historiography*. Ithaca, NY: Columbia University Press, 2013.
- Vines, Amy. "This Ys Her Owne Boke: Women Reading the Middle English Prose *Brut* Chronicle." *Trivium* 36 (2006): 71-96.
- Vogt, George. "Richard Robinson's *Eupolemia* (1603)." *Studies in Philology* 21.4 (1924): 629-48.
- Wakelin, Daniel. *Humanism, Reading, and English Literature 1430-1530*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.
- . "Caxton's Exemplar for the *Chronicles of England*?" *Journal of the Early Book Society* (2011): 75-113.
- , and Alexandra Gillespie ed. *The Production of Books in England 1350-1500*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011.

- Ward, Laviece. "Two Carthusian Histories, their Authors and Audiences." In *Die Ausbreitung kartäusischen Lebens und Geistes im Mittelalter*, Analecta Cartusiana 63, II, 132-6. Salzburg: 1991.
- Waswo, Richard. "Our Ancestors, the Trojans: Inventing Cultural Identity in the Middle Ages." *Exemplaria* 7 (1995): 269-290.
- Watt, Tessa. *Cheap Print and Popular Piety 1550-1640*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991.
- Weijer, Neil. "Re-Printing or Remaking? The Early Printed Editions of the *Chronicles of England*." In *The Prose Brut and Other Late Medieval Chronicles: Books Have Their Histories*, edited by J. Rajsic, E. Kooper, and D. Hoche, 125-46. Woodbridge: York Medieval Press, 2016.
- Weiss, Roberto. *Humanism in England during the Fifteenth Century*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1941.
- White, Hayden. *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe*. Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973.
- Withrington, John. "The Arthurian Epitaph in Malory's *Morte d'Arthur*." In *Glastonbury Abbey and the Arthurian Tradition*, edited by J. Carley, 211-247. Cambridge: DS Brewer, 2001.
- Woolf, Daniel. *Reading History in Early Modern England*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.
- . *The Social Circulation of the Past: English Historical Culture 1500-1730*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003.
- . "From Hystories to the Historical: Five Transitions in Thinking About the Past, 1500-1700." In *The Uses of History in Early Modern England*, edited by P. Kewes, 31-67. San Marino, CA: Huntington Library Press, 2006.
- Zatta, Jane. "Translating the 'Historia': The Ideological Transformation of the 'Historia Regum Britannie' in Twelfth-Century Vernacular Chronicles." *Arthuriana* 8 (1998): 148-161.
- Zemon-Davis, Natalie. *Society and Culture in Early Modern France: Eight Essays*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1975.

III. Unpublished Dissertations

- Clark, Frederic. "Dividing Time: The Making of Historical Periodization in Early Modern Europe." Princeton University: Unpublished PhD Dissertation, 2014.

- Drukker, Tamar. "Readings in the Middle English Prose *Brut* Chronicle." Cambridge University: Unpublished PhD Dissertation, 2002.
- Lamont, Meg. "The 'Kynde Bloode of Engeland': Remaking Englishness in the Middle English Prose *Brut*." University of California, Los Angeles: Unpublished PhD Dissertation, 2007.
- Rajsic, Jaclyn. "Britain and Albion in the Mythical Histories of Medieval England." Oxford University: Unpublished PhD Dissertation, 2013.
- Sinclair, Bethany. "In Pursuit of the *Brut*: Identity, Landscape, and Location with Particular Emphasis on Glasgow University Library Hunterian MS 83." Queens University, Belfast: Unpublished PhD Dissertation, 2008.
- Weijer, Neil. "Compilation, Presentation, and Circulation of the Middle English Prose *Brut* Chronicle, c.1480-1500." Cambridge University: Unpublished MPhil Thesis, 2010.

Neil Berend Weijer

315 Woodbourne Ave.
Baltimore, MD 21212
Phone: (908) 514-1818
Email: nweijer1@jhu.edu

EDUCATION

The Johns Hopkins University

PhD in Medieval History—Expected April 2017

Thesis Title: “How England was Called Albion: The Legendary History of Britain in Script and Print, c.13300-1575”

Advisor: Professor Gabrielle Spiegel

MA in Medieval History—May 2013

Cambridge University

MPhil (with ‘Distinguished Performance’) in Medieval History—October 2010

Dissertation: “Compilation, Presentation, and Circulation of the Middle English Prose *Brut* Chronicle 1480-1500”

University of Chicago:

BA (with Honors) in Medieval History, minor in Russian Language—June 2007

BA Thesis: “Making English History: The *Brut* as a Social Dialogue”

PUBLICATIONS

Articles and Book Chapters

"Re-Printing or Remaking? Two Early Printed Editions of the *Chronicles of England*," in *The Prose Brut and other Late Medieval Chronicles: Essays in Memory of Lister M. Matheson*, ed. E. Kooper, D. Hoche, and J. Rajsic (Woodbridge: York Medieval Press, 2016).

Other Publications

"History Reimagined: Filling the Gaps in England's Ancient Past," in *Fakes, Lies and Forgeries: Rare Books and Manuscripts from the Janet and Arthur Freeman Bibliotheca Fictiva Collection*, ed. E. Havens (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Sheridan Libraries, 2014).

DIGITAL INITIATIVES AND COLLABORATIVE PROJECTS

October 2014: Co-curator, *Fakes, Lies, and Forgeries*.
Exhibition at the George Peabody Library, Baltimore MD.

January 2014: *The Archaeology of Reading in Early Modern Europe*
(<http://archaeologyofreading.org/>).

Conducted preliminary research to prepare for grant application to Mellon Foundation.

SELECTED HONORS, GRANTS, AND AWARDS

Medieval Academy of America Graduate Travel Bursary: April 2017
Butler Dissertation Completion Fellowship: Spring 2017
Folger Library Grant in Aid - Seminar in Early Modern English Paleography: December 2016
Dean's Teaching Fellow, Johns Hopkins University: Fall 2016
Huntington Library Research Fellow: 2015-2016
Huntington Library Exchange Fellow, New College, Oxford: July-August 2015
Singleton Summer Research Fellow: July-August 2015 and 2016
Denis Family Curatorial Fellow: 2013-2014
Singleton Summer Libraries Fellow: June and August 2013
Oxford/Cambridge International Chronicles Symposium Bursary: July 2012
K. Wood-Legh Prize for best MPhil in Medieval History: October 2010
Richter Research Fellowship: September 2006

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Fall 2016: *Myth and History in Medieval Europe*.
Intersession 2015: *Re-Reading the Crusades: Chronicling Holy War 1096-1195*. (with Brendan Goldman)

- Students rated my effectiveness as an instructor 4.71/5 and the course 4.57/5 in overall quality.

Spring 2014: Teaching Assistant, *Culture and Society in the High Middle Ages*.
Fall 2013: Teaching Assistant, *The Medieval World*.
Spring 2012: Teaching Assistant, *History, Politics, and Memory in Russia from Stalin to Putin*.
Fall 2012: Teaching Assistant, *The Medieval World*.

SELECTED PRESENTATIONS, CONFERENCE PAPERS, AND ORGANIZED PANELS

"Further Reading: Supplementing England's Ancient History in Fifteenth- and Sixteenth-Century Manuscripts,"

International Congress on Medieval Studies: Kalamazoo, MI, 5/11/2017

"Hybrid or Hodgepodge? The Latin *Brut* and the Middle English Chronicle Tradition,"

Medieval Academy of America Annual Meeting: Toronto, Canada 4/8/2017

"Nota This History or Tayle: Late Medieval English Chronicles and their Early Modern Readers"

Renaissance Society of America: Chicago, IL 3/31/2017

Panel Organizer, "*Non sequitur*: Reading Across Gaps in Medieval Narrative"

International Congress on Medieval Studies: Kalamazoo, MI, 5/15/2016

"Printing Around the Chronicles of England: A Program of Reading for 'Diverse Gentlemen'"

Radbound/Hopkins Conference on the History of the Book. Pt. 2: Nijmegen, The Netherlands, 6/2/2015

"What's a Text like You Doing in a Place like This? A Closer Look at Some Composite Manuscripts of the Middle English Prose *Brut*"

International Congress on Medieval Studies: Kalamazoo, MI, 5/14/2015

“Keeping Up with the Times: The *Chronicles of England* and John Hardyng’s *Chronicle* in Manuscript and Print”

Radbound/Hopkins Conference on the History of the Book. Pt. 1: Baltimore, MD, 1/19/2015

“Inventing a Glorious Heritage, Forging a Patriotic Tradition: Legendary History in Sixteenth-Century England and France.”

Renaissance Society of America: New York, NY, 3/27/2014

“At the Edge of The Forest: Placing Wace’s *Roman de Brut*.”

History/Literature; France/England: Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, NY, 11/2/2013

“Take it or Leave It: the *Fasciculus Temporum* in Two Editions of the *Chronicles of England*.”

International Medieval Congress: Leeds, UK, 7/2/2013.

“*Par Nature de Parenté et de Dreiture*: Kinship and Family Ties in Wace’s *Roman de Brut*.”

Oxford/Cambridge International Chronicles Symposium: Oxford, UK, 7/7/2012

“Printing the *Brut* Chronicle: One Text, Many Approaches.”

Cambridge University Faculty of History: Cambridge, UK, 5/20/2010.

SERVICE

Organizer - The European Seminar, Johns Hopkins University: September 2014 - May 2016

LANGUAGES

Reading proficiency in Latin; Reading/Speaking proficiencies in French and Russian.

Proficiencies in Early Modern and Medieval Paleography (English and Latin).

Proficient in XML using TEI protocols.